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G. A.

A SECOND DEFENCE OF CHURCH ESTABLISHMENTS:

BEING

A SECOND REVIEW

OF THE SPEECHES,

DELIVERED IN DR. BEATTIE'S CHAPEL, ON MONDAY EVENING, THE

12TH NOVEMBER, 1832,

BY THE LEADING MEN

OF THE

VOLUNTARY CHURCH ASSOCIATION;

IN WHICH THE ARGUMENT AGAINST ESTABLISHMENTS DRAWN FROM THE STATE OF
RELIGION IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IS FULLY CONSIDERED,
AND AMPLE INFORMATION ON THE SUBJECT ADDUCED.

BY A CHURCHMAN,

AUTHOR OF THE FORMER REVIEW OF THE SPEECHES, &c. &c.

"He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him."

GLASGOW:—W. R. M'PHUN, TRONGATE;

EDINBURGH:—JOHN HAMILTON, ST. ANDREW'S STREET;

LONDON:—SIMPKIN & MARSHALL.

MDCCCXXXIII.

SECOND DEFENCE

OF

CHURCH ESTABLISHMENTS.

WHEN I took the liberty of submitting my former Review of the Speeches of the Voluntary Church Association Gentlemen to the public, the full and accredited Report of their Speeches had not issued from the press. It has been published since, and I was naturally anxious to ascertain whether in any of my observations I had misunderstood or misrepresented them. I had a strong security against this, from most of the Speeches having been sent by the authors to the press before they were spoken, and from knowing that the arguments and objections on which I commented, were the prevailing ones used by Dissenters daily in conversation and otherwise. On examination, I am happy to find, that the Review meets the sentiments of the speakers on almost every point, and that the language which they used would have warranted much stronger expressions than I thought it becoming to employ.

But now that the Speeches have been published in full—fuller it is believed than they were spoken;—now that they have been put forth with all the strength and edge, and correctness, of which the speakers are capable;—now that we have some Speeches reported in all their detail, which were formerly reported briefly, and one speech given largely which was never spoken at all, it seems proper to subject the whole to a second Review, and to take up points omitted in the former, or less amply insisted upon, and to show Dissenters that whatever they may imagine to the contrary, there is no fear or indisposition on the part of Churchmen to enter into the controversy with them, and candidly to estimate the weight of every consideration, however small, which they can allege in behalf of their views. I must be permitted to say, in passing, that the "Report of the Speeches" is a very heavy affair; that every Speaker deals much in repetitions and assertions, and always in language which far outruns the sentiment; and that *now* I do not at all wonder that the public meeting approached so nearly to a failure. If the reading of the Speeches, even with the aid of the unspoken speech, be so tiresome, much more must have been their oral delivery, protracted, without intermission, almost to midnight.

In the following observations, I shall observe the order in which the sentiments controverted appear in the Speeches, and not attempt to collect or arrange them in a more natural order, which might deprive the speakers of what they are entitled respectively to claim as their property. I shall, for the most part, omit what has been touched upon in the previous Review, and where I am guilty of repetitions in the present case, I must plead what was my apology before, that the Speeches reviewed abound in repetitions, and that frequently it is impossible to give the full answer to an objection without recalling part of the answer to a former objection, and it is apprehended that general readers are not so quick in detecting the fallacies of plausible objections, nor in seeing the complete reply, as to render such a repetition unnecessary.

The only observation on the opening speech of Dr. Dick, which I have marked as worthy of notice, or as not already animadverted upon, is, that it is as unjust to call upon Dissenters to pay Established Church Teachers, as it would be to call upon them to pay our surgeons and physicians. My answer to this is, the denial that Dissenters pay a penny to the Established Church, except in one or two solitary instances, too inconsiderable to be named—that, even supposing they did pay, there would be no injustice in their contributing their share as members of the State, to institutions by which, they, whatever they may imagine, in common with others, have been, and continue to be, largely benefited—that such theoretical injustice is involved in the very existence of human society—that if there is any soundness in the plea of injustice, it will apply to Judaism as well as to Established Churches of Christianity, and issue in charging injustice upon God, who for ages upheld an Established Church among the Jews, while in no period, and under no possible circumstances or dispensations, could He do aught that savoured of injustice—that the case of surgeons and physicians stands on a footing widely and visibly different from that of teachers of true religion, in as much as where needed, there is always a sufficient demand for them created by the sufferings of humanity; while the more that men stand in need of knowledge and true religion, there is the less demand for them, owing to the insensibilities of a fallen and depraved mind—that were the guardians and healers of the body as little valued by the natural man as the guardians and healers of the soul, there would be need for an Establishment of them as well as of Christianity—that, in certain cases, when demanded by circumstances, the State does provide surgeons and physicians, as in our army and navy, and prisons, and public institutions—that Dissenters make no complaint, and cry out of no injustice, on this score—and that an Established Church is not less indispensable to the welfare of the country than are such officers to the particular classes whom they are called upon to superintend.

Among the Principles of the Association, we find it stated as an objection to Church Establishments, that the same Legislature coun-

tenances and upholds opposite forms of belief and worship. Now, where this is done, it is decidedly wrong, and should be corrected. It forms no essential part of the proceedings of a Christian Legislature, and is not necessary to a Church Establishment. When Christian Rulers cannot succeed in establishing the true religion, it is no business of theirs to give any countenance or support to the adherents of a false religion within their dominions, however numerous these may be. If they cannot do good, they must at least not do evil, and so their duty is, in such circumstances, to leave men alone.

But in point of fact, there are no *opposite* forms of belief or worship in this country countenanced or upheld by the Legislature; such an idea is one of the delusions of the Dissenters. The Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, and the Confession of Faith of the Church of Scotland, could be most conscientiously subscribed by the same individual. The mode of worship, and Church government is different, but not opposite, and that is too small a matter to form any substantial objection with a Christian Legislature anxious to discharge its duty. The instances of opposite faith which this country is guilty of countenancing, are, Popery in Ireland, by an annual grant to Maynooth College, and the establishment of the new Popish Schools, for which the Dissenters fought so manfully; and Popery in Canada; and Hindooism at Juggernaut. And Dissenters will know whether they or the Established Churches have been more zealous in their endeavours to correct these great and crying evils.

Another objection to Church Establishments, among the Principles, is, that they weaken civil government itself, by the infusion of mischievous ecclesiastical influence, by disuniting the subjects of the same empire, &c., &c. My answer to this is, that down to the present day there has been no visible weakening of our civil government from this quarter—that the mutual hatreds and alienations, for which the Dissenters, as a body, have been so famous, have been not less, but much more weakening, to the peace and stability of society—that it is owing to an Established Church, acting as a rallying-point and restraint, that hostile religious sects in this country have not been more numerous than they are, as the case of America well testifies. That had it not been for the Church Establishments of these lands, and the public recognition of religion which they secure, the civil government would not have been nearly so strong as it is, nor would there have been such good reason to expect the Divine blessing on its administration—that it has been found, as a matter of historical fact, that wherever the Dissenting principle of no public countenance to religion has obtained a place, and just according to the proportion in which it has prevailed, there, and in that degree have there been weakness and insecurity, and unsettlement, and progress from one public evil to another; while, on the other hand, just in proportion as the sound principle of a Religious Establishment has been upheld, have civil peace and security reigned. Austria under Joseph, and France at her first Revolution, are examples of the one; Holland and Scotland of the

other. Nor is America any exception to the rule. She is too recent a nation in experience from which to reason against a Church Establishment. Her outward prosperity clearly proceeds from causes independent of her religion. At the same time, such is the progress of Popery, Socinianism, Infidelity, and Slavery, within her borders, that few intelligent men count very confidently upon the stability of her Government. Confusion and dismemberment seem to be preparing for her people, as well as for other nations, which publicly cast off the allegiance of God. It is to be remembered, moreover, that where religious Establishments do give rise, as in Ireland, to weakness of civil government, this is not owing to their principle, but to their abuses and bad management, and that, with the exception of the Voluntary Church Association at the present day, and the Infidel party who support them, there has been no such dissension among the members of the Established Church, and those out of her pale, on the question of Establishments, as to occasion any dangerous weakness to civil society, nor is there even now much ground for the apprehension of evil from this source.

Passing from the General Principles of the Association, we come to an assertion of Dr. Heugh's, that Church Establishments are in their very nature compulsory, and that the only appointed human means for upholding and extending Christ's kingdom are the voluntary contributions and other exertions of the faithful. My answer to this is, that our Church Establishments are neither in their nature, nor, in fact, compulsory—that they interfere with no man's conscience or means—that the provision which supports them has been bequeathed by individuals, or set apart by the State in remote ages, without interfering with any private property, and that it is a very singular compulsion which no man can show that he feels. Supposing that a nation were anxious to establish the worship of God among its members, how could it be possible to do so with less even of the shadow of compulsion than has been actually done in the case of the Established Church of this kingdom? Had the lands and teinds, which, at the best, were very unequally shared between the Protestant Church and the landed proprietors at the period of the Reformation, been wholly given over to the latter, would it be alleged that there was any compulsion on the country *now* to pay them? No. And how then can it be pretended that there is that compulsion in the case of the Church *now*, when, so far as the present generation is concerned, the property is the same, and stands precisely on the same footing? I answer, moreover, that even were the Establishment supported directly from the revenues of the State, this would be no more than what is, and must be done every day in the case of other institutions for the public advantage—that it would be no more than what is due to Christianity, without which the national wealth would never have amounted by many degrees to what it is, and that this objection would hold good against the public support of religion under the Jews, and against national Schools and Universities, as well as against civil Establish-

ments of Christianity. That no man's conscience need to be wounded, that the Saviour cheerfully paid the Roman taxes for the support of false religion, and exhorted his disciples to do the same, and that men's dislike to any particular cause to which a tax is devoted, does not, when that cause is good, prevent the tax, with the Divine blessing, proving beneficial.

And then, as to the other point, that the voluntary contributions and exertions of the faithful are the only appointed human means for extending the Gospel. My answer is, that it may be proved from Scripture, as it has been frequently proved, that it is the duty of the civil magistrate, the representative of the nation, to consecrate all his influence to the furtherance of the cause of Christ; that had the civil rulers in primitive times been Christians, it would have been their duty to make use of all their official power and facilities for this end; nor have we any ground to believe, that these would have been disclaimed by the primitive teachers. That in the circumstances of primitive times there were ample and satisfactory reasons why Christianity should be propagated only by the voluntary efforts and contributions of its Disciples—that when there was no Christian nation it is preposterous to expect there should be precepts addressed to it, and examples of Church Establishments presented—that, in point of fact, the Dissenters do not trust to the efforts and contributions of the faithful *alone*, for the promotion of the Gospel—that they trust to seat-rents, of which there is no mention in Scripture, and which there is no security, proceed only from the faithful, and which are so far compulsory in their nature—and that they also trust to legacies and mortifications, which Dissenters know full well are often given, though voluntarily, by persons who are not Christians, and not, it may be, the members of a Christian Church. Do Dissenters, when acting for the funds, whether of their chapels or societies, receive money only from the faithful? Surely not. And yet, following out their own principles, have they any Scripture warrant for receiving contributions from any but such persons?*

* A friend at Paisley has kindly, and unasked, sent me the following communication. "Mr. H— of L—, who is a member of the Establishment, is *forced*, very reluctantly, by a deed, to pay the Rev. Dr. Thomson of Paisley, of the Relief Communion, one pound a-year for a seat in which he never sits, and for which he only gets a few shillings yearly. Many more are in similar circumstances, yet Dr. Thomson is a principal leader of the Voluntary Church Society. What the difference between this and the payment of a certain sum, even by a Dissenting heritor, to a minister of the Establishment is, it is difficult to see—except that the heritor got value for his money in the original deduction from the price of his land, whilst Mr. H. and the rest get nothing." It is added, Dr. Thomson's church is not half filled. "I am informed that, if the case of the Rev. Dr. Dick of Glasgow be examined into, it will be found to be as absurd, according to his present principles, as Dr. Thomson's. His managers support him, it is said, chiefly by means of feu duty upon land surrounding his church—and they even, I believe, take rent from a society of Baptists who meet in his old church. Do not these Baptists support thus a religion which they do not profess or approve? Does Dr. Dick, in these circumstances,

Next we are told, that none of the American Churches receive, or would consent to receive, any support from their country's bounty, and yet they have not fallen. My answer to this is, that supposing the statement to be correct, that the Americans would not receive any assistance from the State, and it seems far too sweeping to be true—they are, in this respect, quite different from all other churches—that many of the Dissenters in England receive a small allowance from the State, and would have no objections to receive a larger—that the Dissenters in Ireland, including the Burghers, have long enjoyed a *regium donum*—that the Dissenters in the Canadas are petitioning for a share in the Clergy Reserves—that many Dissenters in Scotland have no objection to the principle of an endowment—and that we verily believe that were an offer distinctly made to many of the Voluntary Church Association men, their scruples against State assistance would not be found so insuperable as those of their American brethren. Then we have to remember, that whatever may be the sincere profession of some American Churches, there is great need for legislative interference in behalf of religion among them, as the testimony of Drs. Dwight, Mason, Flint, and many others, asserts—that for a long season there was, in the most religious parts of New England, the provision of an Establishment, and that there was deterioration after its withdrawal—that at the present moment, American Churches do receive donations to their Sabbath Schools from the Legislature; and an incorporation, by charter, of their Churches and Societies; from the same quarter—and the benefit of State interference in appointing fasts and preserving the rest of the Sabbath, which are as inconsistent with the views of consistent Dissenters, as a State provision for the Clergy. We have to add, moreover, that we do not believe that the Established Churches of our land would fall any more than the Churches of America, were there no civil support; though they would be considerably impaired, and that we are not to reason from peculiar periods, when God is pleased to pour out upon a church a remarkable blessing, to common and ordinary periods, when there is no such striking revivals. Why should not the Church of Christ in America, if really as flourishing as is represented, be considered as an illustration of the great Scripture truth, that God preserves and enlarges His Church, even in the most unfavourable circumstances? Does the fact that the Church of Christ was purest in days of persecution prove that it is the duty of Rulers to persecute her?

Turning to the Scriptural argument, Dr. Heugh tells us, as quite

depend solely upon the contributions of his hearers? The plain answer to any remonstrance of the Baptists, supposing it to be made, would be, you get value for your money—you knew the consequences when you took your church. But the same answer ought to be made to every heritor who complains, and all the talk about every man paying his own minister, and about *compulsory* payment, is as applicable to Dr. Dick's Baptists as to any who support the Church of Scotland; and yet Dr. Dick is the President of the Voluntary Church Association."

conclusive of the controversy, that Jesus Christ and his Apostles have nowhere expressly taught that there is to be a legislative interference to support and propagate Christianity. My answer to this is, that we are nowhere expressly taught in Scripture to baptize infants, or to admit women to the Lord's table—and that there is no Scriptural example of either in the New Testament; and yet, that Dr. Heugh, without any hesitation, does both, as being quite Scriptural. We have to remember, that if Scripture nowhere expressly teaches the lawfulness of a Church Establishment, Scripture as little, on any occasion, forbids a Church Establishment, as evil or unjust—that there were good reasons why Christ should make no demand on the Jewish or Heathen powers for legislative assistance in primitive times, and so good reasons why there was no example of a Church Establishment in the first ages—that, indeed, while there was no Christian nation, it is absurd to expect an account of a national Church, any more than to expect in Scripture, notices about Bible Societies, or Infant Schools, or Divinity Halls—that there are precepts and prophecies in the Old Testament which evidently point to Gospel times, such as Psalm ii. 10—12, lxxii. 10, 11. cxxxviii. 4, 5, Isaiah xlix. 23. lx. 1—17, and which recognise the reign of Church Establishments—that one important reason why they are not specially spoken of in the New Testament is, that like infant baptism, and the Sabbath, they are to be taken for granted as a remnant part of the previous dispensation—that, in such circumstances, it is not our duty to prove the Scriptural authority of Church Establishments from the New Testament, but the duty of opponents, to show that their principle is directly repealed in the New Testament—and this is what no one will attempt to do.

It is a remarkable fact, that though there was great danger that the Jews, who were strongly attached to their religious Establishment, would, when they became Christians, rear some Establishment of Christianity, and though very many Jewish prejudices are carefully guarded against in the Bible, yet there is not one word of caution or of warning against Church Establishments, as the great curse of religion—which Dissenters represent them to be—on the contrary, the Jewish Establishment is spoken of with honour, and Christ himself throughout the whole course of his life was a regular, and so to speak, a rigid member of it. Supposing that Christ intended that there should be Established Churches under the New Testament dispensation, there was no need for speaking on the subject—the principle of religious Establishments was one of the things which remained—like infant baptism, it rose out of the previously established dispensation. Supposing, however, that Christ intended that there should be no Church Establishments in Christian times, as Dissenters insist, the facts referred to are quite inexplicable. Church Establishments, should have been brought prominently forward, and denounced as the most dangerous of evils, and suitably guarded against, and yet not a word is spoken to their disadvantage. We have to remember, moreover, that even in the

New Testament, Religion and Magistracy are not studiously separated, as Dissenters are now so anxious to do, but are so closely connected, that viewing the matter most impartially, one cannot see how a magistrate could scripturally discharge his office, without officially interfering in religion, to check evil and promote good. With regard again to the calls in the New Testament to Christian people to provide for Christian Ministers, which Dr. Heugh accounts descriptive of the *only* way in which it is lawful to propagate Christianity, I have to remark, that these exhortations were suited to the circumstances in which the Gospel was, for wise reasons, placed in primitive times—that they are highly important for every age, as teaching the great Doctrine that men are not to labour in Christ's cause gratis, but that they who preach the Gospel are to live by it—that such exhortations do not preclude the use of other modes of support than that actually followed in primitive times—that the Apostle Paul himself, whatever were his reasons, did not live by the contributions of his Christian converts, and received no subsistence from many of the Churches among which he laboured—a clear proof that this form of support is not the *only* one which is lawful, however strong the calls to it which are to be found in the Epistles.

Then we have an attempt of Dr. Heugh's to answer the argument used by the advocates of Church Establishments, that the infancy of Christianity was peculiar, and that the gospel owed much to miracles—and that, therefore, it is unsafe to reason from primitive to present times. He ridicules this idea, telling us, that Establishments were a clumsy substitute for miracles. Now, it is never contended, that Establishments came in the room of miracles, or that the former correspond, in every circumstance, and possess equal efficacy with the latter. But it is contended, and the point is as clear as light, that in propagating a new religion, miracles must have operated very advantageously, in manifold ways, and afforded various facilities, which would cease with their withdrawal. For instance, it is obvious, that the possession of miraculous powers, would not only command an attention for the preacher, which could not otherwise be gained, but would provide food and lodging, and general subsistence for him, without any personal expense. Who would not be forward to entertain one, who perhaps had miraculously restored a diseased or dying relative? There is no way but this, of explaining how the Seventy fulfilled their work, and travelled, and laboured many days, without any pecuniary cost. Missionaries, now-a-days, are not received in the same manner, nor can they act in the same way. They have to be supported, not by the people among whom they labour, but by Societies at home; and their widows and children have to be supported from the same quarter. So small was the outlay to which the primitive teachers were subjected, on their own account, that the chief collections which we read of in the New Testament, were not for the general cause of Missions, but for poor saints visited with famine. Church Establishments do not, and cannot, operate like mi-

racles, but they afford important facilities in the propagation of the gospel. They bring it near to multitudes, at a cheap rate, and in an impressive form, and approach much closer to the effects of miracles, than the precarious exertions of Dissenters can pretend to. It is idle for the Speaker to say, that the age of miracles was the very time for providing for those ages when there were to be no miracles, and that a sentence from Christ, or his Apostles, would have settled the question for ever. That is true—but so would a sentence from Christ or his Apostles, have settled many, many other disputed questions, and yet he has not uttered that sentence. The advocates of Church Establishments, think the question sufficiently clear as it stands—they do not imagine that it needs any more express announcements—they see the principle of a religious Establishment clearly recognised and acted upon in the Old Testament—uncontradicted by any thing in the New—suspended for a season in primitive times for wise and gracious purposes, but during that suspension, more than compensated for by miraculous agency; and what more can be necessary to decide the line of their duty, and the duty of Christian Rulers? Should Dissenters speak lightly of miracles, as they are tempted sometimes to do, the answer is easy. If they were so useless—if truth were quite sufficient of itself, why were miracles employed at all, and so long performed?

But, says Dr. Heugh, the Church cannot be made dependant on the State for support, without being subjected to a species of influence from which she will reap nothing but evil. The State will select for its support, that form of Christianity which best suits its own purposes—it will give the same sanction to what is erroneous, as to what is Scriptural in its profession, constitution, and worship; and will impart a secular and corrupting influence to the whole. Here there are many strong assertions, unsupported by any thing like satisfactory proof. It is not denied, that the State, from misunderstanding its proper province, has not unfrequently done unwarrantable things in the Church, just as she has done unwarrantable things in other departments. But, Dr. Heugh does not, and cannot, show that this is essential to an alliance between Church and State, or that the evils complained of may not be effectually prevented. Looking at the representation which is made in the passage which has been quoted, and the illustration which follows, one cannot help being struck with its unfairness. It is taken for granted, that all the errors and evils in the Church of England, are inseparable from her, and that she is to be held a correct specimen of all Established Churches, and it is also taken for granted, that the civil Magistrate must be some isolated being, who is adverse to the cause of true religion, and who cares about nothing but subordinating all to the State. Now, it is well known, that the Church of England is chargeable with many abuses and evils, which are not at all essential to her existence, and which her best friends have been long most anxious to reform—that she is far from being the most faultless specimen of an

Established Church, and that the State, or civil Magistrate, is just another name (whatever may be individual exceptions to the contrary) for the intelligence and moral worth of the nation—the representative of the national will, and can never, for any lengthened season, be at war with the enlightened sentiments of the great body of the nation.

Waiving these things, however, it is asserted, that the State will select the form of Christianity best suited to its own views, and will sanction what is erroneous, and impart a corrupting influence to the whole. From this, one would infer, that the State, or Parliament, had chosen our religion for us, and had sanctioned what is erroneous on purpose, and so forth. But the truth is, as every one knows, that our ancestors of illustrious memory, took the Scriptures and searched them for themselves, and drew from them what they believed to be the great outlines of the truth of God, and then submitted these to the Legislature of the land; and that the Legislature ratified such articles of faith, and worship, and discipline, as the Established religion of the land, because, believing them to be the truth of the Scriptures, and made provision for their being taught and observed. If there be error in any of these, it is the fault, not of the State, but of the Church; and, happily, the Church of Scotland has reserved the power of amending her imperfections, and correcting her errors, in her own hands. She does not need to apply to the State to enable her to do so. She possesses the power of reform in herself. Perhaps the best answer to all this outcry about the pernicious operation of the State on the Church, is the simple fact, that dependant as the Church of Scotland is upon the State for support, she has been injured so little by the alliance, that Dr. Hough has signed the same Confession of Faith, and observes the same worship and discipline; while, it is believed, that the great body of Dissenters, without an Establishment, have been not less corrupted and secularized than the Church of Scotland with one. It will not do, then, to represent the State as necessarily working only mischief in the Church.

There is a point in Dr. Hough's speech, which I may just notice in passing; the more especially, as it is again and again alluded to by the other Speakers—it is the enormous wealth of the Established Churches. I need not remind my readers, that supposing this to be true, that it would be no objection to the principle of an Established Church—that over-much wealth is an evil which can be corrected. But I notice the objection, to say, that the grossest exaggerations prevail as to the emoluments of the Established Churches—that their members rejoice in the inquiries which are at present making, with a view of arriving at the truth on the subject, and that whether the wealth be large or small, it at least impoverishes no one, any more than so much property in the hands of private individuals.

As to the Church of Scotland, I shall take leave to quote, from Dr. Cleland's Statistics, the following passages. "In the County of Lanark, with a population of 316,790 souls, there are only 51

Parochial Clergymen. The average stipend, exclusive of manse and glebe, is L.253 13s. 2d. If the boll of victual be taken at the low price of 18s., the maintenance of the Parochial Clergy would be only 9½d. to each individual in the county. Again, speaking of the city of Glasgow, and including the Dissenting as well as the Established Church Clergy, he says, although there are 82 places of worship in the city and suburbs, there are only 58 Clergymen who receive stipend, varying from L.150 to L.500 per annum. Few are so low as the minimum, and only two reach the maximum. The average stipend of Clergy of all denominations, in the city and suburbs, is within a small fraction of L.268. If the maintenance of the whole Clergy was chargeable to each individual in the community, it would only amount to 1s. 5½d. in the year—a sum, small indeed, when compared with the important benefit received." The simple fact that there are two Societies connected with the Church of Scotland, one to maintain and educate the orphan sons of Clergymen, and another to maintain and educate their orphan daughters, is a clear proof, that there is none of that enormous wealth in the Church which is commonly supposed.

With regard again to the Church of England, it appears from a statement of Lord Henley's, made the other day, and founded on returns in 1815, that, in the Church of England, there are 4361 livings under £150; and 1350, or triple or quadruple the whole number of the Secession and Relief Churches in Scotland, are below £70; and some go as low as £10 or £12; 2626 have no houses, and 2183 have houses, value only £2 or £3. Putting the first named numbers together, it appears, that 5711 livings, or more than one-half the whole livings of the Church of England and Wales, cost only between £700,000 and £800,000, at the very highest calculation. Lord Harrowby, in a speech delivered in 1811, states the whole number of livings under £150 at 4000; and then remarks—"It had been supposed that these consisted chiefly of parishes where the population was small, and the duty light, but this was not the case. Above 600 of them in 1801, (and since then the population has mightily increased, while the value of money has fallen,) had a population of from 500 to 1000; and near 500 a population above 1000 persons;—of these 79, had between 2 and 3000, 35 between 3 and 4000, 17 between 4 and 5000, 10 between 5 and 6000, and 22 above 6000." In 15 parishes in which the revenue of the Church was £1315, there was a population of 208,000 persons. In 492 parishes, with livings under £150, and a population of more than 1000, (excluding Birmingham and Halifax,) there were 1,200,000 persons, and yet the aggregate revenue of the Church was only £42,646. From a statement of the Rev. Dr. Bridge's, recently made up, and to the accuracy of which he pledges himself, (founding it on Parliamentary documents, and other sources of information,) it appears that the whole aggregate revenues of the Church of England and Wales, including those of Bishops, Deans and Chapters, and Beneficed Clergymen, amount only to £2,142,000, a considerable contrast to the 12 millions, and millions upon millions, of which Dissenters talk so

credulously. Remembering that there are 11,000 parishes in England and Wales, this sum, equally divided, would not afford £200 to each parish Minister, and divided among the whole population of Great Britain, it would be little more than *half a crown* to each person! After this it surely will not be said, that it is nothing but mercenary motives which induce men to enter the Established Churches as Ministers, and then to fight for their continuance; such a charge might be brought with as good reason against the Dissenting as against the Established Church Clergy.

The next point in Dr. Heugh's speech which needs animadversion, is the affirmation as to the numbers of the Dissenters—that the numbers of the Establishment are decidedly in the minority—and that it is undeniable that the Dissenters are a very large majority. Now we deny this *in toto*, and challenge any Dissenter to the proof of it. It is quite common for Dissenters to take for granted that they are the great majority in the nation, and people are apt to believe what they hear often repeated, but we have never yet had the slightest proof of such a point; on the contrary, all the data within our reach most distinctly discountenance such an assumption. To go no farther than the Edinburgh Almanack, we find that the whole number of Dissenting Chapels in Scotland, counting Episcopalians, is about 650; and that the whole number of Churches and Chapels &c., in connexion with the Church of Scotland, is about 1100;—and how then the Dissenters can be a very large majority of the population, especially when we take into account, how small and insignificant many of their Congregations are, it is somewhat difficult to see. It has been common to account Glasgow quite the head-quarters of Dissent, nowhere is it supposed to be stronger, and Dissenters are always most numerous in large towns, because there the Church accommodation is least adequate: yet it appears from Dr. Cleland's Statistics, that those professing the religion of the Established Church, are 104,162, while those professing the endless forms of Dissent, are, with the exception of the Roman Catholics, only 71,299, and doubtless were the Statistics of a great many of our large towns, as accurately taken, the result would be the same, or rather more favourable to the Establishment.

I do not happen to have by me any recent data for ascertaining the proportion which Dissenters bear to Churchmen in England; but I have no doubt that the number of actual Dissenters has been as greatly exaggerated, as the wealth of the Established Church; and that a little inquiry will dissipate the one prejudice as certainly as the other. The parochial cures in England amount to between 10 and 11,000. Now it is a remarkable fact, that the number of Dissenting Ministers licensed in England and Wales from 1760 to 1810, was only 3672, not above two to a county in a year. The licenses for Chapels were indeed much more numerous, but as Chapels are not of much consequence without Ministers, the disparity is easily explained by the same Chapel having three or four licenses according to its successive changes and enlargement; and it is to be remembered, more-

over, that the period included within the years spoken of, was the very period when Methodism arose in England. I need scarcely add, as it is well known, that the Methodists there, greatly exceed all other denominations of Dissenters, and that they may be regarded almost as part of the Established Church. Perhaps, it may be added that from a statement lately made, bearing the marks of authenticity, it appears that only a fourth part of the whole population of Lancashire belongs to the Dissenters, and yet it is well known that Lancashire has long been overrun with Roman Catholics, and perhaps contains more Dissenters than any other County in England.

In forming a judgment upon such a point as the relative numbers of Churchmen and Dissenters, it is important to bear in mind, that Dissenting Chapels include all Dissenters, or, rather are seated for far more than there are actually existing Dissenters, whereas in our large towns there are multitudes baptized, and in connexion with the Established Church, who, owing to the inadequacy of Church accommodation, are not comprehended within the walls of its Churches. We know not a few Churchmen and their families, who, from absolute necessity, are obliged to sit in Dissenting Chapels but who keep up their connexion with the Church, by partaking of the Lord's Supper, and having their children baptized in the Establishment. It is also important to our present object, to remember that supposing Dissenters to be numerically stronger than the members of the Establishment, that they were the great majority—yet it is a sad mistake to conclude, as Dr. Heugh seems to intimate, that they are therefore all enemies to the Establishment, and long for her subversion. With the exception of the Secession Church, the Relief Church, and the Independent Churches, and not even with the whole of these—all the remaining Dissenters in Scotland are friends to the principle of a Church Establishment; and would reform, not destroy, the existing Establishment. We can make it out by liberal calculation, that after balancing the hostile with the friendly Dissenters in Scotland, there is not above 150,000 persons—not the population of Glasgow, to support the Voluntary Church Association, and yet we are to be told that the Dissenters are the great majority of the nation. What, if almost a half of the Dissenters in Scotland were more opposed to the present proceedings of Dr. Heugh and his party, than they are opposed to the Established Church!

I am not so well informed as to the state of feeling on the part of the English Dissenters to the Establishment there, but I have reason to know that they are not so hostile as some of our Dissenting friends in Scotland imagine—that they are anxious for Church reform, but not for subversion; at least, they have as yet, got up no Church destroying Association, though one would think that they had better reason than their Brethren here. The Methodists are understood to have a strong leaning to the Church, and they are the most powerful party. We happen to have heard rather rigid Baptists, when speaking of the English Church, say, that it was a different thing to dis-

approve of erecting the English Church at first, and to wish to pull her down now—and with a few unimportant exceptions, it would seem that the recently elected Members of Parliament, who may be held to represent the sentiments of the Electors, propose nothing farther than Church reform, in which they are seconded by the warmest and best friends of both Establishments. Even Joseph Hume and William Cobbett, if they can be trusted, wish for nothing more than to assimilate the English to the Scotch Church Establishment. May it not be the dread of the stability which this will confer upon the principle of a Church Establishment, which is animating the Dissenters to such unusual virulence and zeal?

But, says Dr. Heugh, there is a common fallacy as to the numbers of the Establishment; though the Establishment be more numerous than any single body of Dissenters, she is much less numerous than the whole combined; and then it is always taken for granted, that the Establishment is one, whereas she comprehends within, almost as many sects as are without, her pale. We have seen how much truth there is in the first part of the assertion, and now as to the second part. Though not distinctly stated, it is obviously insinuated that there are a great many Arminians and Pelagians, and Antinomians, and Arians, and Socinians, in the Established Churches. These are the only sects to which the speaker can refer. Now, not to speak of the gross censoriousness and uncharitableness which such a charge conveys—not to speak of the utter want of proof with which, it is made—not to speak of the profession which is made by the persons alluded to, of the doctrines of our Confession, or of the Thirty-nine Articles, and that, with some exceptions, the experience of Ministers of the Established Church is in direct contradiction to the insinuations of Dr. Heugh, (and they should at least be as well acquainted with the subject as he,)—not to speak of these things,—does the speaker not see how easily the charge can be retorted upon Dissenting Congregations? Are all Dr. Heugh's people staunch Calvinists! Are there no Arminians, or Pelagians, or Socinians, or Antinomians, among the Congregations of the ministers of the Voluntary Church Association? We verily believe that there are as many among them as in the Established Church, only we would fain hope that there are not a great many in either. If Dr. Heugh will take the trouble to inquire into the history of members of Socinian Congregations, the lowest and the worst of all sects, we are much mistaken if he will not find that as great a number of them were once Burghers or Baptists as members of the Established Church; at least this is the result of our inquiries.

I pass over the bitter way in which Dr. Heugh attempts to expose the common fallacy of which he speaks, (which, by the bye, only exposes himself,) by asking to what sect George the Fourth belonged, and the Duke of Cumberland, and Phillpots, and Marsh, and Mant. Why, they belonged to the Church of England. Some of them may have been unsuitable members of that Church; but something more

than a sneer will be necessary to convince us that they do not sincerely profess the doctrine of the Church of England. If Dr. Heugh point at their Arminianism, is it necessary to remind him that the Thirty-nine Articles admit of such an interpretation, and are so interpreted by some of the most holy men in the Church of England. If he point at their lives, I suppose that the lives of some of the persons named, are as pure and irreproachable as Dr. Heugh's. If unsuitable membership is to be a valid objection against a Church, perhaps some will remind him, that even in the Saviour's family there was a Judas, and that Emond the late murderer, of infamous memory, was a rigid Antiburgher. It is indeed a high farce for a man of Dr. Heugh's attainments to speak contemptuously of such men as Phillpots and Marsh, the one of whom could, with his tongue or his pen blow all the speeches of the Voluntary Church Association men to rags and tatters in half an hour, while the other has probably forgotten more theological learning than Dr. Heugh and his friends have ever known. Pray to what sect does Dr. Heugh's interesting friend, the member elect for the Linlithgow Burghs belong—the great patron of the Voluntary Church Association, and the hope of the party—and at the same time one of the memorable *ten* who voted all acknowledgment of Providence in the Cholera to be cant and humbug?

The next point of any importance in Dr. Heugh's speech is the sort of defence which he makes of the present union of Dissenters with the infidel party, in order to dissolve the connexion between Church and State. He acknowledges that infidels hold the same sentiments with the Voluntary Church Association on this subject; but then he says, so do they coincide in reform and civil liberty, and universal education, and a thousand other every-day questions, and that their views as to Church Establishments are not to be prejudiced by this coincidence.—Now, if, as is here confessed, the Infidels and the Dissenters are at one, and it might be added Socinians and Roman Catholics too, why are they not admitted members of the Voluntary Church Association? Why will that Society hold out to the public that none but Evangelical Dissenters are eligible as members? There is either gross inconsistency, or there is the cunning of seeking to obtain all the assistance of such an alliance, without any of its reproach; and is such conduct manly and straight forward, or is it mean and cowardly? But is it a right or a Christian thing for Evangelical Dissenters to be united with Infidels and Socinians and Roman Catholics? Does this argue much for the soundness of their religious principle? It may be of a piece with their practice in adhering to and upholding Socinians at home and Socinians abroad, in the Bible and Apocrypha Society cause; but is it consistent with the rules of Scripture? Is it consistent with Dr. Heugh's own practice in seceding from his brethren on the Bible question?

It is said, however, that they agree with Infidels and Roman Catholics in this and many other questions. Now, admitting this, is it not fitted to shake their confidence in the soundness of the sentiments

which they hold, that they agree with the enemies of what is dearest to them? Do they not see that this is not a common every-day question,—that it is a religious one in which Infidels join only from hatred to Christianity, of which they seem to know better than Dissenters that Church Establishments are important outworks. Do Dissenters not see that they create a disunion between themselves and those with whom they are united in all that is valuable—that nothing can justify their combination with Infidels, unless they are prepared to say, that the blessings of civil liberty, which they imagine to be at stake; precious as they are, are superior to the blessings of true religion—and that of all seasons the present is most unsuitable for such an alliance, when the country is not only warm with political excitement, but when the forces of Infidelity and Popery, both here and throughout Europe and America, are leagued together with unusual violence, to uproot pure Christianity from the earth? Surely the time when enemies combine, is not the season for friends who have a common cause deeply at heart, to divide and join issue with the foe. High authority has told us, that the companion of fools or irreligious men shall be destroyed. Dissenters will, doubtless, one day regret their present friendships. I might remark upon the assertion, that Infidels and Dissenters are agreed upon civil liberty, and universal education, &c. I might show, that if truly religious men, it is impossible that they can hold the same views on these and many other points. I might ask how they are to have a universal education without an establishment of schools, and whether any religion is to be taught in these schools, and how Dissenters will settle these points with infidels—but I pass on to fresh topics. Before doing so, however, I may just allude to the assertion, that if the Dissenters are leagued with Infidels and Socinians, and Roman Catholics, Churchmen are leagued with Anti-reformers, just as if a man who could not go all the length of the Reform Bill cannot be a Christian, or as if all Churchmen were opposed to civil and ecclesiastical Reform, or as if an Anti-reformer, and an Infidel, and Socinian all stood upon the same footing.

In answer to the objection that the Voluntary Church Association will have the effect of breaking up Christian friendships, and creating bad feelings, Dr. Heugh tells us, that no great question can be agitated without doing the same. Now it is admitted that the mere circumstance of stirring bad feelings, is of itself no proof of the badness of a cause—but it is certainly a reason for men being very careful as to the cause in which they embark, and being well persuaded of its truth and importance, and also of the means which they employ to secure it. It is no subordinate matter which should be allowed to divide Christians, already sufficiently divided. Men of the world may without much mischief, be alienated from each other. But it is a different thing as to Christians. Here the evil is unspeakable, especially in present circumstances, far greater it is believed than can be compensated for by any opposing good. What a handle and a triumph will the divisions produced by the Voluntary Church Association

afford to the infidel, and irreligious and profane? Will these be balanced by any good which Dissenters are likely to secure on the other side, or will the one justify the other?

Towards the conclusion of his speech, Dr. Heugh, when vindicating Dissenters from many supposed indignities, which, so far as I know, exist only in his own fancy, states, that they are publicly told, up to this hour, that so little principle is amongst them, that the only reason why they continue to exist in any considerable numbers, is the want of what is called Church Accommodation. Now, taking this representation to be correct, which we unequivocally deny—admitting the truth of what is here alleged as a charge against Churchmen, we must remind the speaker that there is no small ground for it, and that to our certain knowledge there are not a few reckoned among the Dissenters, who, so far as principle is concerned, hold a very slight connexion with them. No one who has gone much abroad among the people, whether of our country or city parishes, and met with Dissenters generally, can be ignorant that a great many of them speak exceedingly lightly of the causes which separate them from the Establishment. Often have we heard, and others with whom we are acquainted have been told by them—that it is all one whether they belong to the Kirk or the Secession—that it makes no difference—that their father or mother happened to be Dissenters before them, and that this is the reason why they are Dissenters—that they could not get room in the Established Church—that they had some misunderstanding with the last minister—that the Secession Chapel is nearer and more convenient—that they would leave at present, but that other people are leaving, and that they do not like to abandon to poverty the man whom they have called. Not to speak of those, who, in spite of these very powerful Scriptural arguments for schism, have of late years been returning to the bosom of the Establishment, who does not know, that when any little office happens to be vacant, which requires attendance on the Established Church, such as the office of parochial schoolmaster, or that of church beadle, or matron to a public institution, or the place of servant in a family who require the servants to attend the Established Church with themselves, who does not know, that in any of these cases there are crowds of applicants from among the Dissenters, strongly recommended too by Dissenting Ministers, who seem to wish to put their friends under the wing of falling Antichrist, and that there is rarely, if any objection, to sink their Dissentism, and conform to the Established Church? So slight is the tenure which Dissenters hold over their people, and so slight the hold which the people themselves hold over their principles.

But to return to the question of Church Accommodation, whatever Dr. Heugh may imagine, it is a certain fact, that the want of it has been an important mean of swelling the ranks of Dissenters, and of maintaining their numbers. It cannot be otherwise; the inadequacy of Church Accommodation in many of our towns is such, that if men design to keep up attendance on religious ordinances at all, they have

no alternative but to take seats in the Dissenting Chapel. Whence but from this cause is it that so many chapels are built, not for the glory of God, or the advancement of true religion, but as pecuniary speculations in which men may profitably employ their money? They know that there is a great want of Church Accommodation in a particular district—that, however desirous people may be, they cannot obtain a place in the parish church, and so they calculate, that by building a convenient chapel, they may get a fair return for their money. It is impossible to give any adequate idea of the fearful want of accommodation in the Established Churches. Means are at present, I understand, in operation throughout the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, for bringing the facts of the case into view, and doubtless the public will be startled and astonished when they are submitted to them in April. I may just mention, that in Glasgow alone, after including all the accommodation supplied by Dissenting chapels, there are, it appears from Dr. Cleland's Statistics, still not less than 20,000 persons for whom there is no accommodation, either in church or chapel; and the case in many other towns must be much the same. The Church Accommodation in London, according to Dr. Blomfield, its Bishop, than whom a more intelligent and zealous clergyman does not exist, is not a tenth of what it should be, and of what is necessary. The Rev. Mr. Yates, in a pamphlet published in 1813, states, from an accurate estimate, that taking a circle within eight miles of St. Paul's, London, and not including the city, there are two divisions of parishes, one of which contains 38 parishes, and 181,882 inhabitants, and another division of 55 parishes, and a population of 970,668, and that of these there is Church Accommodation only for 59,000 of the one, and 110,000 of the other, leaving, after a deduction of 30,000 accommodated in Episcopal Chapels, not less than a united number of 953,000 who can find no accommodation in the English Church, in London and its neighbourhood alone. Supposing that there should be one-half only of the whole number for whom it is necessary to provide seats, still this leaves nearly half a million necessarily strangers to the instruction of the Established Church. Turning to the largest number, it is found to be almost equal to the population of *nine* English counties, having been 16 or 1700 parish churches—and it is to be remembered, that instead of growing lighter, the evil is growing deeper and deeper from year to year. During the last two years, the state has not supplied in England, accommodation for above 200,000 persons. Private subscriptions, legacies, and bequests have provided Church Accommodation for rather more, that is together for about half a million, which is not nearly keeping pace with the increase of the population, without considering the immense previous population which had not been supplied. So great is the want of Church Accommodation, that we have it on the testimony of the Bishop of London, that whenever a new Church is built and opened, it is immediately filled, and what is still more gratifying, that whenever a school is attached to it, and an acceptable minister provided, a visible improvement in the moral

character of the neighbourhood appears. Such being a few of the facts of the case, how is it possible to be otherwise, than that many should be Dissenters from the mere want of Church Accommodation. There is no choice in the matter—nor do we regret that those who cannot find accommodation in the Established Church should find it in the Dissenting Chapel. We rejoice in it. Better far that men be Dissenters than that they grow up in infidelity or insensible to all religious impressions whatever; but how unfavourable to the Established Churches of the land is such a posture of things. Is this giving them any justice? Is it not destroying them with mismanagement? Could any system work as it ought to do, encompassed with such disadvantages?

Passing over Mr. Ewing's speech, which contains no matter for additional remark, we come to that of Mr. Harvie, brother Secretary with Dr. Heugh. This Speech was very shortly reported in the former account, though from the space which it occupies in the present report, we would think that it must have been one of the most important. I must confess, that I do not differ in opinion from the Reporter, who thought that all which it contained might be condensed into a small compass. Instead, like a good speech, of being injured, it gained by abridgment.

The gentleman sets out with telling us, that Church Establishments promote infidelity—that churchmen teach the infidel to identify Establishments with Christianity—that he hates Christianity, because of the grievances of an Establishment which he is compelled to endure—that the support of the State leads him to think that Christianity could not stand of itself, and so is not from above—and that Church Establishments are thus guilty of rearing a very formidable objection to Divine Revelation. The same idea is repeated by two or three of the subsequent speakers, but a more silly or absurd objection was never started. We have read a competent share of the publications put forth by Infidels, ancient and modern, but we never met with this objection to the Divinity of Christianity before. The first place where we meet with it is in the speech of a Christian Minister: I suppose that it is so weak that even an Infidel would be ashamed to use it. Mr. Harvie represents it as a common and prevailing objection. We beg leave to ask the proof of its existence. My answer to it, supposing it to exist, would be, that Infidels pay nothing, or next to nothing, for the maintenance of the Established Church—that they can, and do, distinguish between Christianity and an Establishment—that they see Christianity thrive among the Dissenters of this country, according to their own account, without any connexion with the State—that, in the form of Popery, they see it prosper in Ireland, in spite of the Establishment—that they see it, according to certain representations, flourish in America, without any aid from the State;—he would, then, be a blind Infidel who still thought Christianity identical with an Establishment, and that it would perish without such assistance. But we ask who constitute the great body of our Infidels?

According to this objection, they should be those who labour under the grievance of being brought into contact with the Establishment, and who have to pay tithes or tithe, which was never their own. And is, then, the chief share of the Infidelity of our country to be found among them? Are our heritors or farmers remarkable for their Infidelity? Is not Infidelity rather to be found among those who do not pay even the semblance of a farthing to our Establishments—the poor, and ignorant, and neglected, whom the Establishment has not reached, and whom Dissenters have not even attempted to reach? Have not Infidels always before their eyes the holy lives of multitudes, both in and out of the Establishment, and are not these, and many other things, obvious proofs of the Divinity of Christianity, quite independent of a Civil Establishment of Religion?

Were there any weight in such an idle notion, I can scarcely call it a serious objection, we ought to meet with no Infidels in America, or with a very few, whatever we met with in this country. But what is the fact? Is it not notorious that Infidelity abounds in the United States, from men in the highest office downwards, and that it is spreading more boldly and virulently than even in our own country—that it appears from Ferrall's *Ramble*, in the United States last year, there are not less than 20,000 avowed Infidels in New York alone, and that they have professed their infidelity, within these two or three years?—Did the way in which the inhabitants of New York conducted themselves under the recent visitation of the Cholera, discover more faith or Infidelity?—But to proceed farther, does Mr. Harvie seriously believe that many Infidels, much less all, would be reclaimed by the abolition of our Church Establishments?—They would be very silly and inconsistent Infidels to stop short with this. Both in America and in England, they might say, "the Sabbath is not a Divine institution—it is a mere human device, for it is upheld and guarded by the Statute-book. The State must blot out all enactments on the subject from its code, and leave the Sabbath to itself before we can be convinced that it has come from God. We will not be cheated out of the seventh part of our time, which is more valuable to us than the tithe paid to the English Church, on the pretence that this is the work of God, when all that we have for it is the law of the land, apart from which the Sabbath would perish." Mr. Harvie and his friends who have discovered this new argument for Infidelity, will, with great consistency, support any proposals which may be made to the new Parliament for the better observance of the Sabbath.

I do not believe that any man was ever made an Infidel by the fact of there being Civil Establishments of Christianity in this Protestant land. If any profess this to have been the case, they must either have been Infidels before, or they must have been so weak that any thing would be sufficient to make them Infidels. With equal, or superior, reason, they might become Infidels, because of the abuses of Christianity or the bad lives of Christians, and this, consistently followed out, would leave no Christians in the world at all. If Church

Establishments are the grand nourishers of Infidelity, why do Infidels unite so warmly with Dissenters in crying for their subversion? They should rather, as they value their cause, have kept them up with all their abuses uncorrected. But while I believe that no one has ever been made an Infidel, in the way alleged, I must remind Mr. Harvie, that there are other ways in which a man is far more likely to be led into Infidelity. I can conceive few things more fitted to make a man doubt of the reality of religion than to see men who make a great profession of Christianity abandoning their former principles—speaking lightly of the Reformers, whom once they revered—sowing strife and dissension among Christians—leaguely together with men to whom they have always been most bitterly opposed—calling in even the aid of Infidelity—perverting the Scriptures to speak their own sentiments—by the views which they advocate, throwing doubts over the justice of what God has himself sanctioned—and conjuring up silly objections to Christianity which not even an Infidel ever thought of urging.

The next point in the speech of Mr. Harvie which deserves notice, is the modest way in which he puts forward the Voluntary Church Association as a sort of mediator and director to keep Parliament right when dividing the spoil of Church Establishments. The same idea is mooted in the prospectus of the New Secession Church Magazine, to which so many of the Voluntary Church Association orators have publicly promised to contribute. These modest men, counting without their host, take for granted that Church Establishments are about to be abolished root and branch. Aware that there may be considerable convulsions and commotions, some shakings of private property in the struggle, and that their coadjutors, the Infidels and the Papists, may perhaps make a race for a share of what has belonged to the Church, not being quite so scrupulous about endowments as the Secession and Relief have lately become; aware of these things, the Dissenters propose to step forward and instruct Parliament as to what is private and what is public property, to restrain violence, and procure the abolition in a constitutional way. They have the assurance to tell us that it is out of a regard to the safety of the State, as well as the interests of religion, that they are moving in the present course.

Now, not to speak of the silliness of a handful of Dissenting Ministers, backed by an ill-filled Chapel of tradesmen and mechanics, talking in this style, and setting themselves forward as the only pious, and intelligent, and patriotic men in the nation, I would take leave to remind Mr. Harvie, that supposing the consummation which they so ardently desire to be as near and sure as we believe it to be the reverse, that so far from acting the part of umpires and moderators, the Voluntary Church Association are the most violent anarchists—that no enemy could be more intemperate than they are—that these speeches, and his own in particular, abound in language against Church Establishments and Churchmen, such as it never has been my fortune to meet with in the writings of infidels—that if their words are to be

considered as an index of their actions, the Establishment would be as safe, if not safer, in the hands of unbelievers than of Dissenting Ministers—that we would far rather be at the mercy of the State, much blackguarded as she is by the Speakers, except when they look to her as the destroyer of Establishments, than we would be at the mercy of such self-styled legislators—that in that case at least, we would not have to encounter the revengeful edge of envy, and that so far from being umpires, we hold the Dissenters and their friends to be morally responsible, so far as their influence extends, for the tumult and the bloodshed which resistance to the legal demands of the Establishment, in some cases and quarters, creates.

The Dissenters need not trouble themselves about their new office, until they have found men in the country more violent than themselves, and they will look in vain for them either in the Government or in Parliament. Since, however, they have taken upon themselves an onerous office, without inquiring whether the nation wishes their assistance or not, they may occupy their leisure time, which seems to be rather abundant, in considering such questions as the following:—It being assumed that church property is national property, not only for regulation but also for alienation, what is to be done with all that land held by private individuals, such as the Dukes of Hamilton and Buccleugh, which originally belonged to the Church, and so to the nation, and which still can be very easily distinguished, greatly exceeding all that is at present held by the Church, and for which no sort of public service is rendered? What is to be done with the lay tithes in England, which have been bought and sold for centuries, but which belong to the nation, because formerly belonging to the Church, and compared with which the actual tithes are small? What is to be done with the free teinds of Scotland, in the hands of heritors? What is to be done with all those Churches, and Chapels, and Schools which have been endowed in both Establishments by private individuals, after the Voluntary model—a very great number of the parish Churches of England belonging to this number? What is to be done with our Colleges and Parish Schools, Chaplaincies in the navy and army, Chaplaincies in prisons and bridewells, Chaplaincies in Parliament, the laws and regulations pertaining to the Sabbath, which all savour more or less of the principle of a religious Establishment?

Passing over the specimen of his acquaintance with church history, with which Mr. Harvie favours us, when he informs us that the Voluntary System was in healthy operation for nearly 300 years, and that to a departure from it may be traced nearly all the evils which have so grievously afflicted the Church. Passing this over with the simple remark, that it is contradicted by the abuses and corruptions which the Epistles of the New Testament show us prevailed in the primitive Church; that it is contradicted by the whole history of the first three centuries; that the friends of Church Establishments now, are not responsible for errors and abuses which may have crept into the religious establishment of Constantine; that, in point of fact, his

Establishment was at the time, and for a considerable season afterwards, of decided advantage to the Christian world, which may all be learned by reference to so common a work as Milner's Church History.* Passing over these things as well known to those who are even slightly acquainted with ecclesiastical records, we come to the following tissue of assertions—that the union of Church and State infallibly gives up the management of the Church, in a great degree, to irreligious men; that because the kingdom of Christ is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and belongs only to regenerated men, therefore such characters as Henry VIII. and Charles II. had no right to interfere with the Church, and that the Episcopalians and Roman Catholics in Parliament greatly exceed the Presbyterians, therefore they may force upon the Church of Scotland any degrading stipulations which they please in return for her endowments.

Now, keeping these assertions in view, I beg leave to reply, that the management of the Established Church is not given up to irreligious men—that her standards most loudly condemn all irreligion—that the management is kept wholly within the Church as distinct from the State—that where irreligious men contrive to enter the Church, and to remain there, and to have any influence in its management, that this springs from patronage, and will die with patronage—that there were few such when patronage had no existence—that in Scotland the State has nothing to do with the Church in the matter of management, and that if we would see irreligious men have great influence in religious matters, we need look no farther than to the Relief and Dissenting congregations, with their chapels. Who does not know the power, direct or indirect, of a rich shareholder in a chapel, though his Christianity may be very doubtful?

* “That revolution which abolished the Pagan form of the Roman Empire, which threw Satan from the seat in which he had so long and so furiously persecuted the followers of Christ, and converted that power which had hitherto been employed to oppress and crush the Christian Church, into an instrument of protecting and favouring her, deserves ever to be commemorated as one of the most signal triumphs gained by our exalted Redeemer over his open and malicious foes; and, as such, it is held forth and celebrated in the prophecies of the New Testament. But this, like many other deliverances wrought, before and since, by the right hand of the Lord, was greatly abused. By injudiciously and sinfully pouring wealth into the Church—lavishing riches and honours on her ministers—modelling the external form of her government after that of the Empire, and interposing civil authority, accompanied with penalties, in matters which were purely religious, a secular spirit was fostered, the simplicity of gospel-worship overwhelmed by pomp and ceremony, the civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions in many instances confounded, and the corruptions already existing in the Church fomented and aggravated. From a variety of causes, among which the decline of the Roman Empire, the ignorance and barbarism of the kingdoms into which it was dismembered, and the divisions which reigned among them, hold a conspicuous place—the Man of Sin gradually rose to power, until at last he appeared as ‘that Wicked,’ described in Scripture, ‘who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.’”—*Testimony of the Original Seceders*, p. 8.

As to what right Henry VIII. and Charles II. had to interfere in the Church of Christ, I have to ask whether Mr. Harvie would have been satisfied had these been good men instead of being the reverse—and if not, what is the use, or the fairness, of appealing to such particular cases. I hold that, as kings, armed with that most important and responsible of gifts, civil power, it not only was lawful, but it was their duty, in common with Parliament, to make provision for the pure establishment of Christianity in the land—that the fact of some kings using too much temporal power in religious matters, is no reason for making no use of temporal power at all, but for employing that measure of it which is legitimate and scriptural—that to imagine that a Christian is disqualified, by his office of Chief Magistrate, from using all his influence, public as well as private, in behalf of the kingdom of Christ, (though that be one of the very ends of the appointment of his office,) is a most absurd and infidel notion—that the duties, neither of a magistrate nor of any other holder of office, are destroyed by his individual wickedness—that to suppose that they are so destroyed, is to make sin the excuse of sin, and to suppose that they are destroyed also for the ends of education and civil liberty, as well as for those of religion. That there were as many wicked kings among the Jews, and wicked kings among Gentiles, as ever sat on the throne of England, and yet, that God not only permitted, but enjoined them to use their influence in religious matters—that if there have been bad kings who have injured the Church of Christ, there have been good kings like Edward the Sixth, who essentially promoted her interests. I might ask what right had Oliver Cromwell, the head of the Independents so to interfere with religion, as to aid the publication of the Polyglott Bible, and to send support to the poor persecuted Christians of Piedmont, from the Exchequer, seeing that the Protector's character was not remarkable for its Christianity?

As to the assertion that Parliament may force upon the Church of Scotland any degrading stipulations which they please in return for her endowments, I reply, that Mr. Harvie utterly misunderstands the nature of an Established Church, if he imagine it to be a contract, in virtue of which certain sacrifices are made for value received—that there is not the least foundation for so foolish an idea—that the whole history of the Church of Scotland contradicts it—that multitudes of her ministers and members have died in defence of the supreme Headship of Christ in the Church—that the State has never in recent times attempted to force any degrading stipulations on the Church—that where any thing savouring of this was attempted in early times, it was the deed not of the State, but of a single individual so far acting in opposition to the State as well as to the Church—that whenever the State shall begin to insist upon degrading stipulations, the Church will be ready, as heretofore, to vindicate her outraged sanctity, and sacrifice all her endowments sooner than abandon any part of the doctrine, discipline, or worship, which she holds.

It is a fine thing for one to speak of the degrading stipulations of

the Church, who has subscribed the same confession of faith, and who observes the same worship and who only differs from the Establishment, in belonging to a less pure communion, and in hating patronage, which multitudes in the Establishment hate as sincerely, and fight against as strenuously as he. The ministers of the Church of Scotland are not servile men to submit to any degrading stipulations. Had they been so, they would, like the Dissenters, have cringed to the men at present in power, and not breathed a whisper against the Popish System of Irish Education. But though it might have been their policy to do so, and though several influential men among them had a strong temptation thus to act out of personal friendship for members in the existing administration, yet they nobly sacrificed all such considerations, and stood by the pure and un mutilated Bible, and doubtless they will one day have their reward. When did Dissenting ministers discover as much public principle?

I need scarcely remark upon the paragraph which follows, seeing that it proceeds upon the same false view of the nature of a Church Establishment—that it is fixed by Act of Parliament what doctrines ministers are to teach, and in what manner they are to be invested with office, and so forth, &c. Now, Mr. Harvie knows quite well, or at least, if not very ignorant of the origin and history of the Church of Scotland, he should know, that the State did not resolve upon certain Scripture doctrines which it would be desirable to preach, and a certain government, and discipline, and worship, which it would be desirable to observe, and then established these in Scotland, saying, that whosoever agreed to them should enjoy the privileges of a national Church. This was not at all the way in which matters were managed. Had it been so, there would have been some ground for the allegations which are made, but the people of Scotland having drawn from Scripture what were the doctrines, discipline, and government of the primitive Church, carried these to the State, and the State ratified them as founded on the word of God—not in the way of making them truer or stronger than they were before, but as legally recognising them—so that the Church was freed from challenge and opposition because of them. In short, the Church, like a society, of which there are many, received a Royal Charter, which never, of course, alters the original nature of the society chartered. And what was there wrong in this? The men whom Mr. Harvie would fain claim as his forefathers, could see nothing wrong in it, while no men more cheerfully submitted to sufferings and death, rather than succumb where the State presumed to overstretch her proper province, and to alter or impair any part of the Scripture model.

Oh, but cries Mr. Harvie, what an invasion of the kingly authority of Christ is the law of Patronage, and how should the Church have stood out against it? Very true, and for many years, the Church did stand out against it with all her might, and only ceased her active exertion, when through the operation of the law itself, she seemed next to hopeless of success. All along, and even now, she holds the

power in her Church courts, of defeating the chief evils of Patronage, and, had the Fathers of the Relief instead of separating, stood by her, the civil law of Patronage, would not now have been so strong as it is, perhaps it would not now exist—the opposition of the Church would have been successful. The Speaker knows quite well, that Patronage forms no part of the constitution of the Church of Scotland, any more than the nomination Burghs formed part of the civil constitution of the Country—that it is directly in the teeth of the constitution—that there is not so much as one Act of the General Assembly, approving of Patronage—that she has given effect to it, simply as one of the laws of the land—and that many of the best men in the Church, have been labouring for years to destroy it. As no man, however, thought, because of the nomination Burghs, of leaving the country, and going to America, so the Ministers and Members of the Church, did not think of giving up the Church, because of this one bad law, especially, as the power was left them, of seriously mitigating and controlling it. They would rather seek a repeal of the law, and abide by the Church, as still an instrument of extensive usefulness in spite of Patronage, than so abandon her, as to perpetuate the mischief which they lamented. The fine picture, then, which the Speaker draws, of what used to be called a violent settlement, is not at all to the purpose. There are no such settlements now; even if there were, they would not only not be of the essence of an Established Church, but in direct contravention of the constitution of the Church of Scotland. Perhaps had Dissenters managed the election of Ministers, as it exists among themselves, with somewhat more purity and peace—in greater contrast to the worst species of Patronage, there would not be so many plausible arguments against returning to the Church's original mode of appointing Ministers.

Let not Mr. Harvie tell us, that by the sufferance of Patronage, the tie which connected the martyrs of our land, with the present Ministers of our Church, is for ever severed. We will not so tamely give up our honoured ancestry. We will remember, and tell others to remember, that, with the exception of Patronage, we hold in the doctrine, and discipline, and constitution of our Church, almost all that was held by these venerable men that there is not an evil which afflicts us whether as to Ministers or Congregations, which cannot be traced to Patronage, and which would not perish with her fall, and that there are other ways of clouding the relationship to martyrs, than enduring, while we fight against Patronage—that they who give up the principle of the Civil Establishment of Christianity, and think lightly of the pure diffusion of the Scriptures, and their un mutilated place in every scheme of national education, prove far more clearly and conclusively, that they have ceased to hold any connexion with men, who would sooner have died on the scaffold, than have surrendered any of these vital principles. In the one case, the relationship is weakened—in the other it is destroyed.

By way of answer to such reasonings, Mr. Harvie, along with the new Secession Magazine, would fain persuade us, that Patronage,

(the Magazine adds—pluralities,) with the various evils to which it gives rise, is not a simple abuse, which admits of correction, but is of the essence of an Established Church, and so can be got rid of, only with the death of that Church, and in utter forgetfulness of history, he asks us to tell, when the Church was ever connected with the State, without being attended with these evils. Is it necessary to remind the Speaker, that even though Established Churches, had never existed without Patronage, that that is no proof it is essential to them, and that they cannot live without it? It is only a call upon the State, to try whether an Established Church and Patronage are inseparable. But, in point of fact, history has shown that there is no necessary connexion between an Established Church and Patronage—nay, that the Church is purest and most efficient, when there is no such infraction of a Christian people's rights. I beg to know, what Patronage existed in the Church of Scotland, from 1638, to 1660; and from 1688 to 1712—and for many years after, it was nominally the law of the land—what Patronage exists in our 60 Chapels of Ease—what Patronage prevails in not a few of our existing Churches, where the appointment is in the hands of the people—and what was the state of Patronage, before the Relief body broke off, on that very ground? Does Mr. Harvie imagine, that all people are as ignorant of the origin, constitution, and history of the Church of Scotland, as he is himself.*

And then as to pluralities, many of the remarks made respecting Patronage will apply to them. They may in pressing cases have been allowed in the early periods of the Church, when qualified men for Professorships, were not so numerous as they are now, but it has often been proved (see the Rev. Dr. Burns of Paisley's work on the subject), that they form no part of the Constitution of the Established Church, nay, are quite opposed both to its genius and its laws. At the present moment, I believe, there are not above ten or twelve pluralities in the Church of Scotland; and—thanks to the noble exertions of the Church herself a few years ago—they will in all likelihood die with the men who at present hold them. But why should Dissenters talk so big about pluralities? does not Dr. Dick hold a plurality, and Dr. Thomson of Paisley, and Dr. Wardlaw, and several others? Does not Dr. Dick receive £100 a-year, for giving lectures on Divinity for six weeks?—pretty good payment by the way, for the work done—but a sadly brief season for making young men profound

* "Patronage had been complained of, as a grievance from the beginning of the Reformation; was abolished in the second reforming period; and, after being revived at the Restoration, was again abolished at the Revolution. When the bill for restoring it a second time was before Parliament, the Commission, in a representation which the ensuing General Assembly, pronounced 'most faithful and seasonable,' declared it to be 'contrary to our Church constitution solemnly ratified by Acts of Parliament of both kingdoms,' and calculated to 'inevitably obstruct the work of the Gospel, and create great disorder and disquiet in this Church and land,'—predictions which have been more than verified by the event."—*Testimony of the Original Seceders*, p. 42.

in Theology. No wonder that the Secession and Relief are falling so low in their professional learning, when six weeks' instruction in a year is all that a young man receives, and probably the first week of the six is broken in getting settled, and the last in preparing to leave. But to return to pluralities, with what face can the Dissenters speak against pluralities, when in proportion to their numbers they have probably as many pluralities as the Established Church, and are not so likely to part with them? It is of no consequence to say that the pluralities in the Establishment are better paid than the pluralities among the Dissenters. The chief evil of pluralities does not lie in the amount of payment, but in the diversion of time and thought, and labour from the office of the Ministry to another calling, however important that calling may be. Pray, does the practice of not a few Dissenting Ministers in teaching Schools or keeping boarders, and so eking out the defective generosity of their people, (no great proof of the soundness of the Voluntary Church Association plan,) not savour of the principle of pluralities? Perhaps Mr. Marshall of Kirkintilloch, from having had, as I understand, some experience in these matters may be able to answer the question.

The next point in Mr. Harvie's address which has not been already answered, is an attack upon Dr. Chalmers, whom he is pleased to describe, when attempting to answer one of his arguments, as a Dissenter in principle, and as bigotted a Churchman as exists. A more ridiculous representation was never made. Dr. Chalmers, a Dissenter in principle! In what principle? In keeping the Bible pure and unmutated, and vindicating Church Establishments upon grounds on which no Dissenter dares to meet him, except to his confusion. But proud and envious Dissenters hate Dr. Chalmers, and they have some reason. To call him, however, a bigotted Churchman—one of the most enlightened and liberal minded men of the age, of the most enlarged philanthropy, of the most diffusive charity, one of the brightest ornaments of the Christian Church of Britain, a man who never speaks of Dissenters but to speak of them with kindness—and this is the return. But it seems that Dr. Chalmers admits that Dissenters are of considerable use to the Establishment; that they are like a galley-boat keeping a large ship in motion, and then the Speaker proceeds to spoil the image with a view of overturning the truth which lies under it. But it will not do—Dr. Chalmers is quite right that Dissenters are of use to the Establishment—how long they are to be so is a different question, if the present style of hostility is to prevail. He has only in his modesty omitted another part of the truth, that the Dissenters, especially the Ministers both as to temporalities and spiritual excitement, owe not a little to the Established Church in return. Though Dr. Chalmers is the last man to make the Church to which he belongs responsible either for his arguments or his images, yet I cannot help thinking that he has been somewhat misrepresented in the present case. So far as I recollect, the illustration to which reference is made, is introduced where the Doctor is showing that it is proper

and desirable that zealous Churchmen and Dissenters should be pioneers in undertakings for the furtherance of the Gospel. He thinks that they should go first, and feel the way before them, and then prepare by their experience, for the more powerful application of the Establishment which is to follow. But here the galley-boat is manned not only by Dissenters, but by many individuals belonging to the Church, so that Dissenters must not run away with the notion that Dr. Chalmers gives the credit of the galley-boat's motion to them, and means to charge sluggishness upon the Establishment. He thinks that individual, should precede congregational, or Church exertion. That is all, and the thought is a very good one.

It so happens, however, and Dr. Chalmers will be the last to quarrel with the observation, though it may somewhat disturb the correctness of his image, that in point of fact, the Established Churches instead of being the heavy vessel following in the wake of the Dissenters, have decidedly taken the lead of them in all efforts to Christianize men, whether at home or abroad. In England the Christian Knowledge Society, and the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign parts—in Scotland, the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge—all in strict connexion with the Establishment—laboured in their respective spheres, with greater or lesser success, almost a century before any Association formed by Dissenters appeared, and when these did appear, they owed not a little to the contributions and assistance of pious Churchmen. It is a remarkable fact, too, that even the Irish Protestant Church which it has been so common for Dissenters and Roman Catholics to revile and deride as the very source and centre of mischief, has originated almost all the Societies for the temporal and spiritual welfare of Ireland. Nor did the Irish Church confine her regards to Ireland. So early as the days of the celebrated Bishop Berkeley, the proposal was entertained of Christianizing the wilds of America, and means were employed for that end, while it is well known, that at the same period, the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge in Scotland, was labouring among the savages of the New World, and, at a subsequent day, ranked Brainerd, one of the noblest of men, among her Missionaries. So little foundation is there for the popular notion that Dissenters have taken the lead of Churchmen in religious and Christian objects, and that the Establishment can only be drawn reluctantly along by their superior activity. Before many classes of Dissenters had any existence, or while they were too much occupied with their mutual disputes and differences, to have any zeal to spare for the spiritual good of others, the Established Churches of these kingdoms were acting the part of the first Missionary Society—not accomplishing so much as one would desire, but accomplishing as much as in the circumstances could reasonably have been expected.

In Mr. Harvie's long and heavy speech, there is but one sentence which can be said to contain a fact, and which the speaker endeavours to turn into an argument, but the effort is vain. "The simple preach-

ing of the Gospel," says Mr. Harvie, "in a few years totally overthrew Popery in this country, when it was endowed. The pensioned Church of Ireland, during more than two centuries, has made no impression on Popery, when supported by the voluntary contributions of its friends."—Now, it is not historically correct to say that the simple preaching of the Gospel in a few years totally overthrew Popery in this country. The preaching of the Gospel did much, but there were many other causes at work, and among the rest, that civil power about which Dissenters are so jealous. The first Ecclesiastical historian of the age gives it as his opinion, that had it not been for the protecting influence of the nobles and princes of the land, the cause of the Reformation would have been utterly suppressed in this, as it was in other countries of Europe. Priests, after their conversion, seem not unfrequently to have continued in the parishes of which they happened to be the ministers when the Reformation arose, and immediately on the overthrow of the Popish Church, the Protestant was endowed in her room. Hence there was no protracted interval to make trial of the efficacy of the Voluntary principle over the nation. And then Popery was not totally overthrown in a few years. A large part of the country—almost all north of the Grampians, owing to the inadequacy of the Protestant Church Establishment, continued Popish, or but a few paces from it, for above a century after the Reformation, so that the persecuting soldiery, and the profligate clergy, of Charles II., were nearly all brought from the Highlands, to overrun the faithful Lowlands. The representation of Mr. Harvie, then, as to Scotland, is not correct. Here, however, I cannot help taking occasion to remark, that the religious history of Scotland is strikingly confirmatory of the advantages of a Church Establishment.

Popery, a system of monstrous error and wickedness, which had grown almost intolerable, was assailed by men within the communion of the Romish Church. Various events conspired to give efficacy to their labours. Such was the state of the public mind, that in the Lowland districts a Protestant Church soon came to occupy the parishes which had been held by the Romish Clergy, and what was the result? So admirably was this Church Establishment administered—nearly free from all corrupting patronage, that in twenty years after the Reformation of 1560, a Bible was to be found in every family, and most of the members could read it, though forty years before this, neither Bibles nor reading were known in Scotland, and the character of the people was so fierce, and sanguinary, and depraved, that they were constantly armed, and even the priest at the altar was equipped for fighting. In the days of what may be called the first Reformation in Scotland, from 1592 to 1610, when men had longer enjoyed the advantages of the Presbyterian Church Establishment, such was the state of morals and religious improvement in the population, that, according to the researches of Dr. Lee, it would appear that there was scarcely one in the Lowlands who could not read, and who had not a Bible, and who, where there was a family, did not

engage in family worship. It is not unknown how great was the strictness of private and public morals at that period, especially compared with earlier years, and how well the Sabbath was generally observed.

Coming down still later in the history of our country, we have the testimony of the authentic historian Kirkton, describing the state of things which had been produced by the labours of the faithful Presbyterian ministers, from 1638 to 1660, during the Church's purest days. Speaking of the year 1649, he writes, "Now the ministry was notably purified—the magistracy altered, and the people strangely refined. Scotland hath been, even by envious foreigners, called Philadelphia, and now she seemed to be in her flower." And of the period preceding 1660, he says, "I verily believe there were more souls converted to Christ in that short period of time, than in any other season since the Reformation, though of triple its duration. Nor was there ever greater purity or plenty of the means of grace, than was in that time. Every parish had a minister—every village had a school, every family almost had a Bible. yea, in most of the country, all the children of age could read the Scriptures, and were provided of Bibles either by their parents or their ministers. I have lived many years in a parish where I never heard an oath, and you might have rode many miles before you heard any. Also, you would not, for a great part of the country, have lodged in a family where the Lord was not worshipped, by reading, singing, and prayer. Nobody complained more of our Church Government than our Taver-ners, whose ordinary lamentation was, their trade was hopeless, people were become so sober."* It is to be remembered, too, that this beautiful picture was realized after the disorders created by the first of the Episcopal persecutions. But the Establishment in the Lowlands was then equal to the population, and its administration was unfettered by patronage. The Church of Scotland was in all her strength and purity—such as Establishments may be, and such as we anxiously desire our present Establishment may become. There were, indeed, no Dissenters in these days, but when did Dissenters ever see in their own communion—not to speak of nations—so noble a result? When did America ever present such a spectacle? At a still later period, that which elapsed between the Revolution in 1688, and the rise of the Secession, and down to 1760, before the evils of Patronage began to be felt, how fine were the moral aspects of society in Scotland! What religious intelligence, and moral worth, characterized the bulk of her people—how well observed was the Sabbath, at once the index and the instrument of the best improvement! Very aged men can even still remember how carefully the Sabbath was observed in Glasgow in their early days—how not a person was to be seen on the streets in the evening, and how the silence was only broken by the sounds of family devotion, rising from almost every house. The same state of things obtained in other towns and districts.

* Kirkton's History of the Church of Scotland, pp. 54, 84.

On every day of the week, the doors through whole streets in Dunfermline were regularly shut when the head of the family returned from his work in the morning, and called the members together to family worship—the neglect of the duty was then more wonderful than its observance. Creech, in his *Fugitive Pieces*, speaking of 1763, says, “It was fashionable in Edinburgh to go to Church, and people were interested about religion. Sunday was strictly observed by all ranks, as a day of devotion, and it was disgraceful to be seen on the streets during the time of public worship. Families attended Church with their Children and servants, and family worship was frequent.” While a multitude of causes must be taken into account in explaining the great degeneracy which has overspread our country since that period, no small influence, it is apprehended, must be ascribed to the deadening influence of Patronage upon the Church—the growing increase of the population, without adequate means of Church accommodation—and the inability of the Secession, pure and excellent as she at first was, to compensate for the absence of an efficient national Establishment.

It cannot be said that the Parochial Schools of Scotland are entitled to the praise of those fine, moral, and religious results to which I have referred. It is certainly true, that, by teaching the Bible and the Shorter Catechism, as daily school books, they were important helps to the Church Establishment. Indeed, the Parochial Schools are part of the Ecclesiastical Establishment, and it is to the honour of the Presbyterian Church that she never had a breathing time of peace which she did not consecrate to the rearing and superintending of Parish Schools, and that these Schools always ran parallel, and proportional, with her own prosperity. But with all this, they are too recent in their origin, and too limited in their operation, to deserve the credit of forming such fine specimens of national character. Though they were pretty common in the Lowlands in the 17th century, yet it was not for several years after the Revolution that they were legalized, and it was not till a still later day that they were universal. In the opinion of the present Lord Chancellor of England, publicly expressed when Rector of the University of Glasgow, it was to the Ecclesiastical Establishment for which the people of Scotland had fought through years of persecution and bloodshed, that they were indebted for the intelligence, and morality, and religion, for which they have been distinguished.

Thus does it appear how blessed was the operation of the Established Church of Scotland upon its inhabitants, especially in the days of her purity—how she delivered them from the ignorance, depravity, and barbarity of Popery, and put them in possession of a degree of civilization and Christianity, unknown to any other people. Such is the powerful working of an Established Church, in a perfect form. The case of Scotland lends no countenance to Mr. Harvie's argument. Popery, though much shaken, was not destroyed *before*, but *after*, the Establishment of the present Church—the work was not done by a

Voluntary, but by a National Church. Had there been no such Church, and no subsidiary Schools, it is impossible to believe that there would have been as much religion and morality. There is great reason to fear that not a few districts in the Lowlands would still have groaned under the dominion of the Pope.

But then we are told that the pensioned Church of Ireland, during more than two centuries has made no impression on Popery, supported by the contributions of its friends. Though perhaps this statement is rather too strong—though the great disproportion between the Catholics and Protestants of Ireland can in part be explained by other causes than the inefficiency of the Protestant Church Establishment—though the introduction of cheap food, and the payment of high marriage fees to the Popish Priest, will serve in no small degree to account for the increased growth of the Catholic over the Protestant population, yet we have no objections to admit that the degraded religious state of Ireland is owing in a great measure to the Protestant Irish Establishment. But what is it in that Establishment which is the source of the evil? Is it the principle of its ministers being paid or pensioned by the State—as the speaker chooses, by way of insult to phrase it—or is it owing to the abuses and corruptions which have all along disgraced this Church? It is clearly owing to the latter cause. To cope with the Catholic population of Ireland, the Protestant Church needed to be remarkably pure, and circumspect, and efficient—instead of which, she has been from the beginning borne down with the worst species of Patronage, pluralities, non-residence, tithes, unequal distribution of Church property, and to crown the whole, till within these few years, there has not been one of her ministers who could preach in the native language of the great body of her people, and there have been no parochial religious schools to compensate, in some degree, for these gross defects. In such circumstances, it would have been strange had Ireland and her people been different from what they are. The principle of an Established Church has not only not had justice—it has been most miserably mismanaged, weakened, and injured. But does this show that there is no strength in an Established Church, to overthrow error, and work out good for the people of its charge? Does this show that the Voluntary System is the only efficient one? Turn to the Highlands of Scotland. There for a lengthened season, after the Reformation had illuminated the Lowlands, Popery with all her train of evils, darkened and oppressed the people. We have reason to believe, that our now peaceful Highlands then bore in many features, a strong resemblance to the state of Ireland in recent and present times. We know what was the character of the population when the Covenanters were struggling for pure religion and civil liberty in the Lowland districts—that they were ignorant and profligate—bloody and ferocious—that in 1670, and for many years afterwards, they were in a state little removed from heathenism. Though immediately after the Revolution of 1688, a large supply of Irish or Celtic Bibles was sent to the Highlands, yet with the exception of

particular books of Scripture, and pious practical pieces, there was no edition of the Gaelic New Testament for 70 years afterwards; and how then *could* there be any Scripture knowledge or its precious fruits? The Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge in Scotland, instituted in 1701, originated with a society of gentlemen "reflecting on the ignorance, Atheism, Popery, and impiety that did so much abound in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland." They speak of the poor people who now live under Christianity in gross ignorance, corrupted by Popery, and in the height of immorality, poverty, and idleness—the greatest miseries which can befall men—and that the parishes are so large and distant, that it is impossible for the inhabitants to have frequent access to their Parish Church, by which they want much of the ordinary means of instruction, and from thence in a great measure proceed their ignorance, immorality, and Popery—that the ministers have often several parishes to supply, and that many of the people do not hear the word more frequently than once or twice—three or four times in a year—and that in various places the Lord's supper has not been dispensed since the Reformation, that is for 140 years. So late as 1758 there were nearly 200 parishes in the Highlands which had no Parochial Schools.

Such was the former state of the Highlands of Scotland, and what is it now? Though much still remains to be done—though in spite of the labours of eight or nine Voluntary Educational Societies there are still 25,000 children, between six and sixteen years of age, who cannot read, and have no means of acquiring the power of reading, yet with all this, what a contrast are our Highlands to Ireland, and to what the Highlands once were; and how did the contrast originate? Was it the Dissenters who Christianized and civilized the Highlands? No. Till within these few years, the Dissenters never visited the Highlands except on a party of pleasure. There are large districts where not a Dissenter is known, where the very word is unintelligible, and at the present moment, there are very few of their teachers or their missionaries who know a word of Gaelic. How then has the moral and religious condition of the Highlands been so much improved? It is owing altogether to the labours of the Establishment. The General Assembly, after much effort, was successful in supplying all the parishes with ministers—the ministry was a resident one—there were no pluralities. In the Gaelic districts the ministers preached in the language of the people, the Parochial Schools were gradually filled up, and for 120 or 130 years, the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, an admirable society, little known, but abundant and noiseless in labour, and in strict connexion with the Established Church, added its influence in various ways, and enlarged the means of good. Even at the present moment, it is doing double the work of any other Society in the Highlands, and almost at half the expense.

Now, suppose that the same means which have been so successful in overthrowing Popery in the Highlands, had, through the medium of the Irish Church Establishment, been applied to Popery

in Ireland, suppose that the Irish Church had been freed from every hurtful abuse—that her ministers had preached in the language of the people—that they had been aided in their labours by Parish Schools—and such a Society, as the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, is it possible to believe, that Ireland would have been the same at the present hour in point of Popery, and every other attendant evil, as we know it to be? Let not, then, the inefficacy of the Irish Establishment be pleaded as an argument against the principle of an Established Church. If she has done nothing against Popery, let it be remembered how much the Church of Scotland has done against that horrid delusion, so destructive of the best interests of time and eternity.

It is not enough, however, to act on the defensive. I turn the argument to the offensive, and beg to know, what the Voluntary Church Dissenters have done for Ireland. We have seen what they have done for the Highlands. We are all well aware what they have done for the 20 or 40,000 in Glasgow, who are living beyond the pale of any Christian means or communion. But what have they done for Ireland? If Popery be supported and enlarged by the voluntary contributions of its friends—if Voluntary Associations be the more easy and powerful way of rooting out error and spreading Christianity, surely the Dissenters have done a great deal for Ireland—surely they have overtaken what the Establishment left neglected, and as they have truth upon their side, have accomplished much more than the Popish priesthood. But what is the fact? They have done next to nothing. Any thing that they have done is but common to them with good men belonging to the Establishment, and has been wrought by the same Societies, and the existing state of things in Ireland, is the best proof how little has been accomplished by any party. So far from the condition of Ireland being a proof of the uselessness of a Church Establishment, it affords a striking illustration of the absolute necessity of such an institution to the Christianization and civilization of the people. If, even in Scotland, with all her advantages, there be so large a proportion of Highland children untaught, and that after many years' exertions of eight or nine Voluntary Societies—exertions which, from the state of their debts and engagements, it would seem that they are unable to surpass—what must be the permanent condition of Ireland—if for religious instruction and religious education, left to the resources of spontaneous charity? It cannot be expected, that she is to be more favourably dealt with than Scotland, and the simple fact that Government propose to make a grant of £30,000 a-year, for the establishment of Schools—more than the whole cost of the Parochial Schools of Scotland—is a clear proof what is their estimate of the permanent necessities of the country. Thus have I run over Mr. Harvie's lengthened speech, at much greater length than its intrinsic importance demands or deserves, and this remark applies to all the Speeches—but he has given me occasion to introduce some matter, which serves to show the advan-

tages of religious Establishments, at the same time that it vindicates them from his charges, and I thank him for the opportunity. As I close his speech, I cannot help observing, that, if this Gentleman preaches as he makes speeches, I have great sympathy for the poor people of his charge.

There is a point or two in Mr. Beith's petulant speech, which needs notice. In addition to what I formerly said, as to the right of the Protestant to a share of the revenues of the Popish Church, I have to remark, that this right is not founded on her being nearest of kin to Popery, as is said, or insinuated—that there were no religious sects at that time, but the Romish and the Protestant—that multitudes of the very men who had been Catholics, and who, along with their Fathers and Friends, had contributed this property became Protestants—that in 1560, the Parliament of Scotland, which abolished the power and religion of Rome, was a free and unanimous Parliament—and that in 1581, the National Covenant, abjuring Popery, was gladly and cheerfully sworn by all ranks throughout the nation, from the King downwards—indeed by the great body of the people—that the State gave away much of the Church revenues to private individuals, which property is now held to be unalienable, and that there is no reason why what was transferred by the State to the Protestant Church, should be more alienable. Independent of these considerations, I contend, that the State has no right to appropriate to secular, what was set apart, and expressly devoted by the donors, to religious objects—that the Popish Establishment had become a great public evil—and that it is part of the duty and the doings of the State, every day, to break bad and pernicious destinations of property, and to apply the property willed to the use *safest and nearest to the purpose for which it was originally bestowed*. Without such a power residing in the State, it is easy to see, that in process of time the country would come to be covered with absurd and injurious institutions, which admitted of no remedy; while, on the other hand, it is not less clear, that, if the State had the right at pleasure, to alienate property devoted to public uses, there is nothing but the most private property which would be safe, and neither Asylums, nor Hospitals, nor Dissenting Chapels would be guarded against the wanton appropriation of the State. I might take still higher ground, and hold that the State is bound by reason, and Scripture, and expediency, to make provision for the maintenance of religion—that as a Protestant State, it made provision for the Protestant Establishment, without injury to any existing interest—but I have said more than enough to meet Mr. Beith's objection.

I was much at a loss, from the Newspaper account, to make out how the Ecclesiastical Establishment of Glasgow, cost the Community L.4,500, as alleged by the Speaker, knowing as I did from Dr. Cleland's Statistics, that the Seat Rents of the city Churches, covered the whole expense, to within a few pounds; and learning, moreover, that now, there is even a considerable surplus, nor did I know that

the sum charged by Mr. Beith, was an annual sum. But, from the full report of the Speeches, I see how it is. The Speaker calculates the annual interest, on the building of the city Churches at L.4,200, and charges this to the Corporation of the city. Whether he is correct in doing so, I cannot say. But supposing him to be correct, and that the sum is paid by Dissenters and Churchmen, jointly, or at least in a combined form, the matter admits of easy vindication, on the ground that institutions for the public good, a good in which all share—must be borne by the public purse, without reference to the particular opinions of each contributor, which would be an end to all civil and ecclesiastical society. This is the same ground as that on which the English Dissenters receive L.2000, and the Irish Dissenters L.40,000, from the public revenue, a revenue which is formed by the contributions of Churchmen, as well as Dissenters—the objection is equally good, against the one as against the other.

But descending from this high and general ground, I can inform Mr. Beith, for his satisfaction, in addition to what was formerly urged, (to which I beg leave to refer the Reader,) that fine and expensive Churches form no essential part of an Established Church, that there has been far too much of this style of building in past time—though, by the way, the Dissenters are not behind their neighbours in this sort of rivalry—and that it has been reasonably calculated, that were all the money received at the doors of our city Churches, for the Poor, thrown into an ecclesiastical fund, it would, together with the Seat Rents, not only pay the Minister, but the interest on the Building of moderately expensive Churches, in which case, the Corporation of the city would not need to pay even a farthing to the Established Church of Glasgow.* But the joint public of Churchmen and Dissenters would gain nothing in this way; the assessment for the support of the poor would be proportionably higher. If Mr. Beith loses by the Clergy, he gains by the Poor. It is well known, that the Collections at the Church doors of Dissenting Chapels, do not go to the general Poor, nor do the Dissenters generally support their own Poor. They have enough to do with their Ministers and the debt or expenses of the Chapel, to need all that they receive in this way. Indeed, whatever they may allege, and however much they may endeavour by their misrepresentations to enlist the Poor Man against the Establishment they have themselves very little sympathy with the Poor. When a man is not able to give a *good* collection, relatively speaking, he is not a little looked down upon

* From the Rev. Mr. Gibson's excellent Pamphlet, just published, it is made out in a manner which it will require some sophistry to evade, that the Established Church of Glasgow, instead of being any burden to the public, actually contributes above L.1,700 to the public purse, and so, instead of taxing the Dissenters, puts, according to their proportion, so much money into their pockets, and yet the Dissenters, in very gratitude, cry out and complain of the Church. Where will their next pecuniary argument come from? They must be wary of meddling with arithmetic, it is a dangerous science to men engaged in a bad cause.—Round assertions and abuse are far safer.

among them, and when such persons become sick and indigent, they hand them over to the Parish funds, and to the contributions made at the Established Church doors. This is a procedure with which Ministers in the Establishment, and Managers of the Poor's funds, are very well acquainted. Even supposing that Dissenters supported their own poor, and that the Established Church did nothing more but support its poor, does Mr. Beith not see that a great multitude of the poor would be left unprovided for, and that the public assessment, which he at present pays, would need to be enlarged—an enlargement from which the collections at the Established Church doors now save him.

Mr. Beith next proceeds to allude to the Ecclesiastical Establishment of Edinburgh, and it is singular, with all their vauntings, that when the Dissenters are called upon to specify any case in which they are taxed for the Established Church, they can only point to two instances, or including Paisley, to three, and that these cases, even as they stand, are so little to the purpose. He tells us, that, some two or three years ago, the Town Council of Edinburgh took it into their heads to assess the people so much per pound on their rental, for the support of the Established Church, and that the people, by the passive scheme of resistance, defeated this, and in such a procedure on the part of the people he evidently rejoices, thinking it all right. Now, there is a sad mis-statement of facts here, which considerably affects the case. The impost for the support of the Church Establishment of Edinburgh is not two or three years old only, it is nearer a century—it was imposed, not by the Town Council, but by Act of Parliament, and the provoking part of it does not consist so much in the tax itself, as in this, that Judges, and Advocates, and Writers, who constitute the richest portion of the people of Edinburgh, are exempted from paying it, and pay no share of it.

Then, it is to be remembered, that the seat rents in Edinburgh nearly pay the Clergy, but instead of being so appropriated, are thrown into the common funds of the town, and a tax, bearing the name of the Clergy, and exposing them to all its odium, substituted in their room. I need not remark, that neither the Church nor the Clergy are responsible for this obnoxious tax—that it is no part of their doing—that the blame rests with the Town Council, or with Parliament, and that were it abolished to-morrow, the same sum would need to be raised to meet the general expenditure of the city, (now helped by the seat rents,) only the tax would not be connected with the name of the Church. By all means let this tax be changed. We wonder how the people of Edinburgh have endured it so long—but let it be abolished in a constitutional way, and let the Establishment be maintained from its own and the general resources.

The Speaker rejoices in the passive and the active resistance which is made to it by some of the citizens of Edinburgh—that, instead of petitioning Parliament to do away with it, they allow their property to be seized for the payment, and then get up a mob, shouting the

cry, "Rouping for ministers' stipends," and so at once defeat the sale and save their own pockets, and bring odium on the Clergy. What is this but the Irish system of opposition to tithes in miniature, and is it right, or is it Christian? Does Mr. Beith not see that it may be extended much farther than to stipends—that it may be applied to rent and to taxes, and that it would be as easy to get up a hue and cry of rouping for pensions—rouping for the support of war and slavery—as rouping for ministers' stipends—that the principle followed out would dissolve civil society itself? And as to its Christianity: was this the way in which the Saviour acted when he paid taxes to Cæsar—which taxes went to the support, not of the ministers of the Gospel, but of the ministers of idolatry—of the persecutors of the Gospel? Was this the way in which he exhorted his followers to act, when he enjoined them to render unto Cæsar the things which were Cæsar's? Was this the way in which the primitive Christians acted? Did they refuse to pay the taxes of Nero, alleging that their consciences were invaded by the payment? Did they allow their property to be seized, and then get up a popular cry at its sale, and endeavour to bring discredit on the Government, and to retain their own property? No. There was nothing of this in their spirit or conduct, they were even marked among the Heathen for the cheerfulness with which they paid their taxes. They might, in a constitutional manner, seek to be released from an unjust and unequal impost, but numerous, as no doubt these were, they rigidly abstained from all violence, whether passive or active. How unlike their conduct to the views of Mr. Beith, and his friends, the lowest rabble of Edinburgh—the latter of whom, while crying out against the excellent ministers of the city, probably did not themselves contribute one penny to their support! What shall we think of the Christianity of men, who can approve of and delight in such proceedings? Is the communion of a Church which holds such men, pure and Christian?—Far rather would I be the poorest minister of the Irish Protestant Church—starving on the lowest fare of the peasantry—an innocent sufferer by brutal violence, yet faithfully pursuing the path of duty, than be the richest citizen of Glasgow or of Edinburgh, breathing such an unhallowed spirit. Will it be alleged that the consciences of Dissenters, whether ministers or people, are more pure and sensitive to evil than the consciences of Christ and his Apostles? It is common to exclaim against the Clergy of the English and Irish Establishments as mercenary men, and as extorting money from the reluctant. The fact is, as is quite notorious to all who are acquainted with the subject, that no class of men are more pillaged of their property—that their actual receipts are far below their legal claims—that they make immense sacrifices for the sake of peace and character—and that wicked and unprincipled men avail themselves of this to treat them in a way in which they would not dare to treat a layman, or a mere man of the world, for a single hour, who had no public character to maintain. And who then are the mercenary men?—not the

Clergy, but their cowardly, knavish enemies, who cloak their own dishonesty and avarice under the pretence, forsooth, of tenderness of conscience.

Mr. Baird of Paisley's Speech has been sufficiently answered already, with one exception—what he says regarding the dead and degenerate state of the Clergy of the Church of Scotland. To this charge, Dr. Starke, the succeeding speaker, adds the charge of holding and teaching all sorts of pernicious error. We shall class the speakers and their objections together, for they are almost identical. We are told that the Church of Scotland has been slumbering for 150 years. If so, she slumbered for 50 years with the Secession in her bosom, and the forefathers of the objectors must have slumbered along with her. But the assertion is notoriously absurd. The Church of Scotland has not been in what could justly be called a state of slumber for more than a third of these years. We have no objections to admit, that the Church of Scotland has slumbered, and that far too deeply and long—that for a protracted season she was not nearly so efficient as she might have been. But what then? Does this show that she is not a Church of Christ, or that the principle of an Established Church is in itself wrong? Which of the primitive Churches, bating one or two exceptions, did not, without any Establishment, slumber even in the lifetime of the Apostles? Did the American Churches never slumber?—whence then their "Revivals?" Have the Dissenters in this country never slumbered?—Witness the degeneracy of the English puritans into coldness, carelessness, and Socinianism during the last century, so that at the present moment, in Lancashire and Cheshire alone, out of 53, there are not less than 44 Socinian Chapels, which once belonged to, and were amply endowed by, orthodox Presbyterians. Remember, too, the Arianism of the once Evangelical Dissenters of the North of Ireland, now happily recovering from their errors. And if Presbyterian Dissenters in Scotland, I mean the Secession and Relief, have not had time enough to degenerate so far as their brethren elsewhere, yet how have they fallen, and how fast are they falling now. Read the description of them, by one of themselves, the late excellent Culbertson of Leith, "nor let any of us, says he, be indifferent with respect to the public state of religion in our day, especially among our own ecclesiastical connexions. Our profession as a public body is still pure, and our discipline and order are the same as they were at the beginning of our existence as a separate communion; but there does not appear to be that life and vigour in the body which it formerly possessed—our gold is become dim, our fine gold is changed. Whatever causes have operated to produce this effect, a slight comparison between the present and the former state of practical religion among us, may soon convince the inquirer, of the truth of this mournful fact." This is evidently a favourable picture—a picture drawn by a friend. Who but such a one would say that their profession and practice was the same as at the beginning? Would Ralph Erskine, were he now to rise from the dead, recognise the identity? Can any one know how

the Dissenting ministers conducted themselves in the Bible Society Controversy, and the Irish Education question, and before and at the recent Elections, and not be persuaded that they have sadly fallen, and that as to Christianity many of them are getting fast asleep, however much they may be awake to party politics.

In truth, the degeneracy of religion in the Church, of which Dissenters complain, was far more extensive, and brought on by far other causes than the possession of a Civil Establishment.—At one and the same time, religion degenerated through France, and Germany, and Holland, and Great Britain, and Ireland, and, speaking generally, through all the Dissenting bodies of these countries. It was a European degeneracy which reached even to America. And when the revival came, among whom did it appear? Was it among the Dissenters? No. The revivals under Wesley and Whitefield in England, and in various parishes of Scotland, originated with the ministers of the Established Church, and were even carped at and ridiculed by many Dissenters, particularly the Secession. So far as we know, the Dissenters have never been honoured of God with any distinguished revivals of religion, such as those which have repeatedly descended and are descending now upon the Established Churches. Is that one of the reasons why they are making so much of the American revivals at present?

My answer, then, to the charge of slumbering and degeneracy, brought by Mr. Baird against the Established Church of Scotland is, that the primitive Churches slumbered, and that the Dissenters themselves slumbered—that the causes of degeneracy are not peculiar to the Establishment—that they were increased by Patronage, and to that extent will be abridged by its removal—that the Church of Scotland has greatly revived, and is reviving more and more from day to day—that her ministers are discovering far more disinterestedness and public principle and devotedness to their work, amid the excitement of politics, and soundness on many points than their Dissenting brethren. And as to the charge of erroneous doctrine or worldly motives preferred against some of them, my answer is, that it is greatly exaggerated—often, according to the knowledge of those who are better informed, decidedly false—that Dissenting ministers are not free from similar charges themselves—and that were they as numerous as the ministers of the Establishment, and their courts as open to the public, probably these charges would be equally numerous and imposing. Need I remind my readers, that while there is too much to blame in all parties, there are at the same time evils belonging to Dissenters, of which Churchmen are free—that they know nothing of the earth-born rivalry of building Chapels, not for the glory of God, or the good of souls, but in the mere spite of party, to have the start of the parish minister, or to be on a par in point of numbers with some Dissenting antagonist in the neighbourhood. If any one wish for an illustration, he need not travel beyond five miles from Glasgow.

We next come to the speech of the Rev. Mr. Anderson of Glasgow

—the speech which was never spoken, but which was deemed so valuable as to be worthy of publication. Does not its publication seem to intimate a conscious weakness—a felt insufficiency in the others? However that may be, certainly no part of its value lies either in its literature, its taste, or its reasoning. There is but one representation in it which deserves any notice, or which has not been already answered. The Speaker is abundantly warm, and tells us how deeply he feels the sinfulness of Church Establishments, when lying on his bed pondering in the stillness of the night. If Church Establishments be so sinful, why did he not earlier interpose to show their sinfulness? Where has been his uprightness to his own mind, and his sincerity towards the people of his charge, to allow institutions which he accounts so anti christian and so offensive to the Most High to prevail all along without one whisper of opposition? And now that he has been awoken, what is his great argument against Church Establishments? Why, that they make “the eating of the bread and the drinking of the wine of the Lord’s Supper at the expense of the Infidel, who blasphemes the Lord more loudly, that he is compelled to furnish the elements of a sacred feast, under the threatening of confiscation of goods, or the seizure of his person and imprisonment in the jail.” There is much more to the same purpose, which is evidently intended to be very emphatic and original, but which I cannot help accounting weak and silly in the extreme.

In the first place, it is taken for granted that all our rulers and the State are Infidels, though professing Christianity and swearing by it, and though Christianity be incorporated, so far as it suitably can be, with the laws and constitution of the State. I suppose it is imagined that a bad man in office neutralizes the duties of his office—that a bad Minister is a good argument against the Ministerial office, and that there neither is nor ever has been any good men invested with magistracy. Then it is taken for granted that Infidels pay, and are compelled to pay, for the support of the Church Establishment, whereas it is clear as noonday that with one or two trifling exceptions, no man, whether an Infidel or a Christian, pays one farthing to such a purpose, and so can far less pay for communion elements.

Why, I beg to ask, does the Speaker fasten upon the provision for the sacrament, if furnished by the State, as being especially sinful? If a Civil Establishment of Christianity be in itself wrong and unwarrantable, it is so, not only in the matter of the Lord’s Supper, but in every thing else—in the building of Churches and the support of Ministers, as well as in the communion. Would Mr. Anderson be satisfied if the expense of the Lord’s Supper were defrayed by the Voluntary collections of the members of the Establishment, while every other appointment as to the Church remained the same as at present? No. And why, then, where the consistency of dwelling on this point, as if there were any peculiar guilt in it, or as if the whole case rested here?

Admitting what we deny, that the money which purchases com-

munion elements comes from the public purse, what then? How were the increased sacrifices which were offered at Jerusalem, on the occasion of the Passover, defrayed? Were they not drawn from the body of the people, and were not many of that people worldly and unbelieving, and is this ever stated in Scripture as an objection to the administration of the Passover—the emblem under the Jewish dispensation of the Supper of the New? The Dissenters of Ireland, including the Burghers, receive some £40,000 a-year from the public exchequer, and part of it, no doubt, goes to the purchase of communion elements; should the members be disturbed in their devotions at the communion table on this account, and remember that this money is contributed by Infidels, and Socinians, and Atheists, as well as Christians, and that if such contributors did not pay the taxes out of which this sum is formed, they would have their property confiscated, and themselves imprisoned? If Dissenters in Ireland are disturbed at all by such thoughts, and they would be very foolish if they were, the disturbance should in justice be stronger in their case than in the case of the Established Church, in as much as their *regium donum* comes directly from the taxes paid by all descriptions of character, whereas the provision of the Establishment proceeds chiefly from ancient bequests of land.

Mr. Anderson, I suppose, has no objections to the interference of the State in preserving the sacred observance of the Sabbath, and would subscribe a petition going to Parliament on that errand, and yet does he not see that, putting altogether out of sight the fact that the State, by such laws, deprives the irreligious man of the seventh part of his time, which he might devote to secular work—putting this out of sight, does he not see that no legal observance of the Sabbath can be secured without, at least, some expenditure of the public money, and that the Infidels and Atheists, and all those who dislike and profane the Sabbath might well turn round and say, casting Mr. Anderson’s sentiments back into his teeth, “Remember that the quiet and the rest of every Sabbath which you enjoy is purchased out of taxes to which we contribute, and which we dare not withhold without being punished and imprisoned. Listen, in imagination, to the cries of extortion which we are compelled to utter, and then think whether you can enjoy another Sabbath till you have petitioned the Legislature to have nothing to do with the Sabbath, and to leave men to act as they please through all its sacred hours.”

Lastly, to come still nearer home. From whence are the elements for celebrating the communion in Mr. Anderson’s congregation furnished? It is presumed from the same source which defrays all other expenses—the seat rents. And who pay these seat rents? Are they all Christians, and faithful men? May there be no servants of the Devil who sit in a Chapel and pay a seat rent. Mr. Anderson knows that the latter supposition is quite possible—that there are many belonging to such a character in all Churches and Chapels. And how then can he partake of the Lord’s Supper in peace of mind, when

haunted with the idea, "In all probability part of these elements are furnished by the seat rents of the servants of the Devil, and seat rents, too, for which my managers would have, or might have, imprisoned and confiscated, had they not been paid. What an awful thought—I cannot communicate." It will not do, then, to keep up seat rents. They must go the way of Established Churches, of which they savour. No money can be received but the free-will offerings of the people at the Church doors, and even then one must stand at the plate and distinguish between the converted and the unconverted, and receive only the money of the former, for the money of the latter, though voluntarily offered, is not recognised in Scripture, and is in itself poisonous. We are warranted to receive nothing but the money of Christians, and it is only then that we can expect a blessing on the ordinance of the Supper. Such is the Voluntary System reduced to consistency.

I pass over all the idle and unsupported assertions of the Speaker as to Church Establishments being, by their fancied grievances, the grand promoters of Infidelity, having already sufficiently animadverted on this new idea. But in taking leave of Mr. Anderson, I must remark, that in his conclusion, he sees a glimmering of truth to which his brethren seem to be strangers. He has serious apprehensions because of the Dissenters' remissness in duty as to Church Establishments, that the abolition of them may be intrusted to the hands of Atheists, and then adds he, "Woe to us all, for they may not trouble themselves to discriminate between the Tax kirk of the king, and the Voluntary meeting-house of the people." Now, without concurring in the reason assigned, or in the childish and insulting language which is used, I think it not at all improbable that could the Dissenters succeed in their object (for which I have no fears, if Patronage be abolished), and by the aid of the united forces of Popery and Infidelity, pull down the Establishment, they would do this to their own certain danger and discomfiture. They seem to have forgotten how much they owe to the Establishment, for the place, and respectability, and safety, which they enjoy in society, and how much they would lose by her death—that as it is the Establishment which breaks up new ground, and introduces religion where it was unknown and unfelt before, while Dissenters, for the most part, only cherish it where it already exists—so that the abridgment or destruction of the one agency, would, and must, in the same degree, abridge and destroy the other agency. They seem to have forgotten that Infidelity, however much she may pretend present friendship, hates and derides the Dissenting Chapel as much as the Established Church, and that the latter could not be overthrown, without sanctioning views of property, which, if followed out, must terminate in the destruction of the former; and they seem to have forgotten what all history has proved, that Popery has no objections like them to a legal establishment of religion—that whatever she may now feign, it is part of her essential character to be paramount—that, at this moment, she is making

decided progress, both at home and abroad, and is in the course of being officered by some of the most talented men—that it would not require a very great deal more exertion to make her the Established Church of Ireland, an object, after which she has been long labouring, and that neither she nor Infidelity have any scruple—notwithstanding all their professions of liberty, to oppress, and to persecute, where this is needful, to the attainment of their designs. Taking these and similar considerations into account, I regard it not less the interest than the duty of Dissenters, to rally round the Established Churches, zealously to pray and to labour for their reformation, and to unite with them, thus purified as the members of the same great Christian community, instead of acting the part of changeable, if not traitorous friends, and turning against them, and presenting our common Christianity under the disadvantage of a broken and weakened front. In the one case, the friends of true religion and order, of liberty and peace, would be strong and almost unassailable. In the other case, they will eventually triumph, but their dangers may be great, and their sufferings severe.

I have no remark to make additional to what was formerly made, on Mr. Marshall of Kirkintilloch's speech. I shall only give some notices of the state of religion in America, which, instead of invalidating, strongly confirm the view which the Rev. Mr. Flint had given of the Southern and Western States of the Union. It is not so much owing to any dislike to the principle of the State lending its assistance to the cause of religion, which has prevented the rise of an Established Church in America, as to the endless divisions and subdivisions of religious sects, and to many of them being nearly balanced in power. It is clear from not a few incidents which could be quoted that the Civil Legislature of America has no objections to interfere in religious matters, and that the body of the people are not so scrupulous upon that point as some Dissenters in our country imagine.—Nay, that American ministers are very well pleased to receive donations of public money for religious objects, and the protection of law for their Sabbath, and the punishment of law for intemperance and swearing. But the population of America is split into such multitudinous religious divisions as we have no conception of, and as most seriously check all efforts to promote the cause of Christ, on a great and public scale. We are told, that a member of the Legislature of Massachusetts, lately asserted in the House of Assembly, "That he was one of a family of twelve, that among these twelve were to be found Unitarians, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Methodists, and Catholics; that for himself he belonged to no particular church, being a member of the church of Christ." And much in what follows, will confirm the statement. This is one of the unhappy consequences of the absence of a religious establishment, and its operation is as unhappy. Towns and districts, which, from their numbers, would be quite equal, and perhaps willing to support a settled pastor, are so divided into parties, and so jealous of each other, that no pastor is

ever provided, and the people live and die in comparative heathenism.

But facts are much better on such a subject than any general reasonings, and those which I am about to record are not only sufficient for ever to put to silence all the declamation of Dissenters on the prosperous condition of religion in America, but to fill every Christian heart with the deepest sympathy and concern. A better argument for a religious Establishment, drawn from expediency, could scarcely be found than what is here supplied. Reverting, for a moment, to the testimony of President Dwight, as to the state of religion in the United States at the beginning of this century, or thirty years ago, we find it to have stood thus: In Connecticut, where the principle of a religious Establishment was maintained, there was a population of 251,002, and 209 congregations. In the States south of New England, where the principle of a religious Establishment was not acknowledged or maintained, there was a population of 4,033,776, and only 430 congregations. To supply the latter population as fully with ministers and churches as the former, the whole number would need to have been 3,344 churches, instead of 430. In Connecticut, continues Dr. Dwight, every inhabitant, who is not precluded by disease or inclination, may hear the Gospel, and celebrate the public worship of God every Sabbath day. In the States specified, it is not improbable that a number of people, several times as great as the census of Connecticut, have scarcely heard a sermon or a prayer in their lives. To complete the picture, it is only necessary to add, he says, that the number of churches in all places where there is an Establishment, keeps full pace with the population. Every inhabitant, also, who enters a church finds a seat. The Doctor remarks, that the statistics of Massachusetts (where there was also the principle of a religious Establishment), would have presented a result equally favourable, and, what is still more striking, speaking of these two States, he says, "I know of no country in which revivals of religion have been so frequent in proportion to the number of inhabitants, or so extensive as in these States. God, therefore, may be considered as having thus far manifested his own approbation of the system."

Should it be said, or supposed, that these facts describe a state of things which existed long ago, but that a new order has begun. I ask where were the benefits of the Voluntary System in America, down to 1800? Did that system work as beneficially as its present advocates imagine or anticipate? Did it preserve from error, or sloth, or spiritual death? Was religion at that period more prosperous in America than in Scotland?

But I shall come much later down in the religious history of America than the beginning of the century. I come down at once to 1815. Was religion in a more flourishing condition then, than it was 15 years before? Did the Voluntary Church System improve greatly in its power with the lapse of years? Let the following statements,

drawn from the Reports of Religious Societies in America, and supplied by the Americans themselves, testify. My first quotations are from the Missionary Tour of the Rev. Messrs. Mills and Smith, west of the Alleghany mountains.

"The Rev. Mr. Wright of Lancaster is well acquainted with the proportionate number of the destitute in Ohio. And in his opinion, as many families, as one in five, are not possessed of the Scriptures. According to this estimate, more than 13,000 Bibles are necessary, in order that there may be one to each family. This territory (Illinois) is deplorably destitute of Bibles. In Kaskaskias, a place containing from 80 to 100 families, there are, it is thought, not more than four or five. We did not find any place in this territory where a copy of the Scriptures could be obtained. Merchants occasionally bring into the territories books of this description. The common school Bible is not unfrequently sold for two dollars. When we consider the inferior manner in which the Bible is often printed, this is certainly a very high price.

"We could not ascertain that there had ever been any Bibles or Testaments sent into this territory for gratuitous distribution, and comparatively but a few territories are supplied with either. Some, who are anxious to obtain the Bible, and able to purchase it, have been for years destitute. One man, whom we saw in this territory, informed us, that for ten or fifteen years he had been using exertions to obtain the sacred Scriptures, but without success. From the best estimate we could make, with respect to the proportionate number of destitute families in the three territories of Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri, we are led to believe, that 10 or 12,000 Bibles are necessary, in order to supply each destitute family. This State, (Ohio,) although in many parts deplorably destitute of the means of grace, is on the whole, far better supplied both with Established Preachers and Missionaries, than any of the States or Territories west or south of it. With a population of about 250,000, it has more than 50 Presbyterian and Congregational ministers, making an average of one preacher to 5000 inhabitants; while the State of Kentucky has not one Presbyterian minister to 10,000 inhabitants, and the North-western Territories not one to every 20,000. It is probable, then, (Indiana Territory,) that there are three Presbyterian clergymen now in the Territory. But what are they for the supply of so many thousands? They are obliged to provide principally for their own support, by keeping school through the week, or by manual labour. They have, therefore, very little time to itinerate. These settlements (on the Miami and White Water) are yet in their infancy. It is said, however, that they are able to support a minister. And yet there are people here, who, for five years past, have not seen the face of a Presbyterian clergyman. Six miles from Kaskaskias, (Illinois Territory,) there is an Associate Reformed Congregation of 40 families. Besides this, we did not hear of a single organized society of any denomination in the country, nor of an individual Baptist or Methodist preacher.

"In all this Territory, there is not a single Presbyterian preacher. And that is not all; when we arrived, we learnt that very considerable districts had never before seen one. An inhabitant of the Eastern States can have no adequate conception of the want of schools in this country (Missouri Territory). It is very common to find men of considerable property, whose children cannot read a word. The greater part of this State (Kentucky) may be considered as a proper Missionary field. Some of the counties, containing from 10 to 12,000 inhabitants, have not a Congregational or Presbyterian minister within their limits.

"The State of Kentucky, according to the last census, had a population of more than 400,000 souls. 30,000 Bibles are probably wanted to supply all the destitute families. There are about 80,000 people of colour, principally slaves, within the limits of the State. It is very rare that a Bible can be found in the possession of any of them, though many of them can read; and were they possessed of it, many more would soon learn. By an estimate made about two years ago, it appears that there were twenty-five counties in the State Tennessee, containing nearly 15,000 inhabitants, without a Presbyterian minister in either of them. The vices common in our western country prevail in this State, intemperance, profanity, Sabbathbreaking, gambling, &c.

"The want of Bibles, and other religious books, in this State, is probably as great as in Kentucky. A respectable clergyman says, 'perhaps one-fourth of our population has not a Bible.' According to his estimate, which we think is too favourable, more than 10,000 Bibles are wanted, in order to give a copy to each destitute family. The whole of this Territory (Mississippi Territory) is exceedingly destitute of the sacred Scriptures. Very few Bibles have ever been distributed in it. There is, indeed, at Natchez, a pious gentleman, who is a Bookseller, and keeps Bibles on hand for sale. But many of the people live at a considerable distance from Natchez—and very many of them are too poor, or too indifferent to religion, to purchase. Indeed some are even ashamed to buy a Bible. When they ask for one at the book-store, they often think it necessary to frame some frivolous apology for their conduct. The degraded Africans, although there are many individuals among them that can read, are almost, without exception, destitute of Bibles. The number of slaves in this Territory, is about 20,000; and the Bible is almost the only book that can be circulated among them, without offence to their masters. There are some American families in this part of our country, Louisiana, who never saw a Bible, nor heard of Jesus Christ. There are some hopefully pious persons, who cannot obtain a Bible or Testament." These facts were given us by a religious teacher, who had been among the people of whom he spoke.

"It is a fact that ought not to be forgotten, that so lately as last March, a Bible in any language could not be found for sale, or to be given away in New Orleans. And yet 8,000 Bibles would not supply the destitute in this State."

In the general summary, it is said by Messrs. Mills and Smith, "our exertions have been stimulated by a deep conviction of the deplorable state of that country. Never will the impression be erased from our hearts, that has been made by beholding those scenes of wide spreading desolation. The whole country, from Lake Erie to the Gulf of Mexico, is as the valley of the shadow of death. Darkness rests upon it. Only here and there, a few rays of gospel light pierce through the awful gloom. This vast country contains more than a million of inhabitants. Their number is every year increased by a mighty flood of emigration. Soon they will be as the sands on the seashore for multitude. Yet there are at present only a little more than one hundred Presbyterian or Congregational Ministers in it. Were these ministers equally distributed throughout the country, there would be only one to every 10,000. But now there are districts of country, containing from 20 to 50,000 inhabitants, entirely destitute. And how shall they hear without a preacher?"

"From the estimates made in the preceding pages, it appears that 76,000 families are destitute of the sacred Volume, in this portion of our country. These estimates are not ungrounded and exaggerated conjectures. They are the result of much inquiry, and patient examination."—See *Mills' Missionary Tour, passim*.

My second quotations are from the Account of the Massachusetts' Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, published at Andover in 1815.

"It is to be regretted (at Rhode Island) that but few of the instructors are duly qualified for their employment; that in most of the schools no religious nor moral instruction is given; that the voice of prayer is never heard, nor the Bible read in them. So great indeed is the fear of the catechism in most towns, that in many schools even the commandments are not permitted to be taught. In the few schools in which this kind of instruction was given, order, proficiency, and good manners were uniformly the most conspicuous. 'Among all the families,' says one of the Missionaries, 'on which I called, (more than five hundred,) I found but two in which I had reason to believe that family prayer was at any time practised.' The same deplorable neglect was constantly lamented, wherever they visited, even among professors.*

"Excepting the town of Providence, there is not in the three Missionary counties, (Providence, Kent, and Washington,) which in 1810 contained 55,565 souls, i. e. nearly three-fourths of the population of the State, one Congregational or Presbyterian Church. The inhabi-

* When it was urged on a Baptist minister, of uncommon seriousness and steadiness, by one of our Missionaries, "that it ought to be matter of discipline in the Church, if professing heads of families did not pray." He replied, "he should lose almost all his members if he insisted upon it;" and observed that "the Methodists practised in that way, and they excommunicated all their best members."

tants of Rhode Island who profess to believe Christianity, are divided into Baptists, Quakers, Episcopalians, Methodists, Congregationalists, Christyans or Smithites. The Baptists, the most numerous denomination, are subdivided into Calvinistic, Arminian, Separate, and Seventh Day Baptists. The inhabitants also of each town (parishes are not known in that State) are divided, though not equally, into these several denominations. Hence the indisposition and inability to support regular well-informed public teachers of religion. Hence the general prevalence of ignorance, bigotry, enthusiasm, and fanaticism, together with their legitimate progeny, scepticism and infidelity. Hence also the common profanation of the Sabbath, and the low state of morals in that region. In many places the preachers hold but one meeting on the Sabbath, and that in the afternoon. Indeed the sentiment is common and openly inculcated by the Baptist preachers, that 'no time is holy but that which is spent in the house and worship of God.' This general aversion to public worship experienced by our Missionaries, is owing, in part, to the very strong prejudices excited in the mass of the people by their illiterate preachers, who are constant and vehement in their invectives against learned hirelings, *i. e.* Congregational Ministers. Another cause that has contributed not a little to produce this indifference in persons of more education and thought, is furnished by the *manner* in which public worship is generally conducted in that region, and by the ignorance, enthusiasm, and eccentricities, not to say vices, of many of their preachers; among them it does not appear that there is more than one of college education.

"Of twenty-seven Baptist, Methodist, and Smithite preachers, with whom our Missionaries became acquainted in the region, and most of whom they heard preach, there are but few, according to the journals, whose characters and sentiments are such (even if they possessed the requisite talents, natural and acquired) as to recommend religion to men of discernment and integrity. Of one it is noted, 'he is a man whose character is not nearly spotless, but he does not want words; and this is the chief talent of many preachers, and often renders them popular, though the words convey no idea.' In one town there was no minister, except a negro, who could not read a word when he began to preach, and often boasted, 'I did not know B from a bull's foot,' proving by this, to the satisfaction of many, his call from Heaven; and nothing could undeceive them but the vileness of his conduct. The character of Baptist preachers in general, as stated in the journals, is, that they are enthusiastic Socinians, profoundly ignorant, and very noisy; that the object in their sermons is, 'to rouse the imagination and heat the passions, without communicating any light to the understanding, or conviction to the conscience.' With this view, 'they use the most dolorous tones and thundering vociferation, in which they pour forth a stream of unconnected vehement nonsense.'—'All the preaching and exhortation I have heard,' says one Missionary, 'has been calculated to excite laughter or tears.' Ignorance,

enthusiasm, dogmas, and practices such as have been stated, defy all comment. Their genuine offspring among the lower classes of society, are errors of every name, bigotry, fanaticism, hatred of the truth, and a train of low vices; and among the higher ranks, contempt of the clergy, disgust at the name of religion, sheer infidelity, and downright atheism. A few years since, in New Hampshire, the towns of Newington, Greenland, Stratham, Newmarket, and Durham had all settled Congregational Ministers. Now they are in a destitute and broken state. There yet remain a considerable number who are disposed to maintain religious order, and a few friends to evangelical truth who are famishing for the sincere milk of the Word. But a small proportion of the people are disposed to raise money to support pious, regular, and well instructed preachers.

"Without descending to particulars, it may be stated generally, that in the counties of Rockingham and Strafford, containing (exclusively of *Portsmouth* and *Exeter*) 76 towns, and according to the census in 1810, 83,047 inhabitants, there are 45 towns, which, with their inhabitants, 40,286 souls, are destitute of the stated means of grace. Of these 45 towns some have been destitute ten, some twenty, some thirty, some forty years, and in some the gospel ministry has never been statedly enjoyed. One lamentable consequence is, that in some towns a Christian Church has not yet been formed; and in some, where Churches exist, the Lord's Supper has not for ten, twenty, or thirty years been once administered. Most of these Churches are also much reduced in number; one from sixty-two members to two females; several to but one male member; and in one town, containing 1063 souls, the visible Church of Christ, after a stated ministry of twenty-eight years, has been many years totally extinct.

"Put up," says a Missionary, "near the place of meeting, a family, whose religious divisions form a good picture of the place; the man a confirmed Universalist, his wife a member of a Congregational Church, a daughter a Methodist, two daughters-in-law followers of Elias Smith, a son without any profession. You ask what is the number, education, and moral education of the sectarian preachers in this region? There are about thirty ordained and licensed preachers in this vicinity, and about sixty who preach and exhort in their public assemblies. Among the whole, not one has much more than a common school education, many with difficulty read a psalm or hymn, and some cannot read so as to convey the sense. Most of the Calvinistic Baptist preachers are of good moral character, but some are not. All the others are Antinomian, and shape their course accordingly."

My last quotations are from the third Report of the American Society for educating pious youths for the ministry, descending somewhat later than the preceding Reports as it comes down to September, 1818.

"A respectable gentleman now resident in the West, says in a letter to the Directors, 'The objects of your Society have long had the

next place in my heart, to those of the Bible Society. I have too often seen in other parts of the country, professed preachers of the gospel, who could not teach, and would not learn. Judge then, how I must have felt, in this region, where I have seen *more than one preacher*, who was ready to avow that he *could not read the Bible*. From another region, a gentleman of equal credibility writes, that 'there is a considerable number of preachers, who can neither *read nor write*. In other extensive districts of the United States, preachers are to be found, who acknowledge that they have read only *parts* of the Bible; and some whose ignorance is not so great, are notwithstanding incapable of teaching children, in a common school, the rudiments of the English language.'

"In all calculations which have been recently made on the subject, it has been common to allow that the country would be properly supplied, if there were one educated minister to every thousand souls. That there should be at least this number, will appear reasonable, when we reflect that in England and Wales, with a population of 10,150,615, there are 10,434 clergymen of the Established Church; while the dissenting ministers are supposed to be even more numerous than those of the establishment. If only one-half of these were estimated to possess competent qualifications, there would be more than one to 1000 souls.

"In 1753, there was in New England on an average, one liberally educated minister to every 628 souls. When we say, then, that there should be, in the United States, one minister to 1000 souls, we only claim that the country should be supplied a little more than half as well as New England was actually supplied, within the memory of many now upon the stage.

"The United States contain about 9,000,000 inhabitants. At the rate of one minister to 1000 souls, this population requires 9000 ministers. Let us now see what is the actual number.

"To avoid misapprehension, the Directors wish two things to be kept in mind. One is, that while the College Catalogues are taken as the only basis of *accurate* calculation, the estimate of *competent* ministers includes, as will be seen, a large number, not educated at Colleges, who are supposed to have acquired, in some other way, sufficient learning to be safe interpreters of the Bible. The other is, that this estimate has no respect whatever to difference of religious denomination.

"From the triennial catalogues of the following Colleges, viz., Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Dartmouth, Union, Brown, Middlebury, Williams, Bowdoin, Columbia, Carlisle, South Carolina, Transylvania, and William and Mary, it appears that only 1,465 settled ministers, alumni of these colleges, are now alive.

"Of these 1465 ministers educated in the above-named American Colleges, probably there may be as many superannuated and infirm, as ought to be reckoned for the number educated in foreign countries and now resident among us. But to make a liberal allowance for

this latter class, some of whom are highly respectable, let 135 more be added, making a total of 1600 educated ministers.

"With respect to the number of ministers, who have not received the advantages of collegial instruction, but who may yet be considered as competently educated, we have no means of exact information. Probably, however, the pious and intelligent of every denomination, will be satisfied, that it would be a large estimate to consider them one-half as numerous as those who have been publicly educated; that is, to reckon them at 800. But place the estimate at 900; and then the whole number of competent religious teachers in the United States of all denominations, will be 2,500, and the deficiency 6,500.

"The general view, which has now been given of this subject, is strongly confirmed by the following statements respecting particular districts of our own country.

"In North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia, containing, according to the last census, a population of 1,223,048, there are but about 110 competent ministers, leaving 1,113,048, destitute of proper religious instruction. A respectable gentleman, who is a native citizen of South Carolina, informs us, that in an ancient district of the state, embracing an extent of 900 square miles, contiguous to the seacoast, there is but one place of worship, and that not used; and not one Christian church or minister of any denomination.

"The states of Indiana, Mississippi, and Louisiana, with the territories of Alabama, Illinois, Michigan and Missouri, contain a population of about 350,000, and nearly the same number of square miles as the whole of Europe, with the exception of the Russian Empire. Yet in this vast region, which is becoming populous and wealthy, with unexampled rapidity, we cannot ascertain after much inquiry, that there are more than 17 competent and stated preachers of the gospel; that is less than one to 20,000 souls. And it is affecting to learn, that such important places as Mobile, Blakely, Fort Claiborne, Huntsville, Madisonville, Baton Rouge, and Natchitoches, which are becoming seats of enterprise and influence to this new world, have no Christian teachers of any denomination.

"In East Tennessee, which contained, in 1810, 17 counties and 101,367 inhabitants, an intelligent gentleman on the spot, says,— 'There are fourteen counties, in which there is not a single regular or educated minister of the gospel.'

"Concerning the western parts of Virginia, a respectable gentleman resident in the State, says, in a letter to one of the Directors; 'The deplorable situation of this region is enough to awaken sensibility in the heart of a stone.' He then proceeds to say, that in eight counties west of the Great Ridge, containing 48,587 inhabitants, there are about 1000 people, connected with the Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists; leaving more than 47,000, not connected with any religious societies; and four entire counties without any religious institutions whatever. In another district, he says, there are 53,000 people in the same dreadful state; in another, 20,000 in

the same state, except that there are a *very few* Methodists and Baptists. In another district of fine country, compact, rich, and populous, there are near 60,000 people who are connected with no religious denomination whatever!

"This letter represents one tract of country larger than the whole of New England, (excepting Maine,) in which the writer says, 'there are but *three* educated ministers. There are but a handful of Methodists and Baptists, who deserve a great deal of credit for their zeal and exertions. But here are 180,000 people, who are absolutely without religious teachers of any sort!'"

"Concerning the western parts of Pennsylvania, a gentleman of unquestionable credibility says, 'there are extensive districts in which there is not, and never was a school. More than half the adults probably can neither read nor write; and there are thousands who never saw the Bible, nor any other book, nor ever heard a sermon; and this among a people who have extensive farms, in fine order, with large orchards, brick houses, and stone barns. One district has 40,000 people, with but one fixed pastor.'

"Another gentleman, a respectable Missionary, describes a tract of country, in Pennsylvania of one hundred miles extent, in which there is but one settled minister.

"The Committee of an Education Society, just formed in the Western District of New York, say in their address to the public, that in 200 organized congregations of that state, ministers might soon be settled, if they could be obtained. In one county of that state, adjoining Connecticut, there are 10,000 people, and but *one* regularly qualified minister. In New York City, it is estimated that there are 78,000 people without the means of religious instruction, and 14,000 families attached to no denomination of Christians.

"If we come to New England, where Christian privileges are enjoyed in a higher degree, than in any other region of the country, there is much to excite the solicitude of good men. The population of New England is about 1,500,000. The number of ministers qualified to preach the gospel, among *all denominations*, cannot be estimated at more than 1000; leaving a deficiency of 500.

"In the two oldest counties of New Hampshire, which contain 77 towns, there were in 1813, (and the case cannot be essentially altered still,) 45 towns destitute. In 24 of these towns, containing 20,000 inhabitants, there were but 161 church members; and in nine of the 24 towns there was not one; seven had always been destitute of preaching. One church had had no communion for five years;—another none for twenty years. Two churches had become extinct, and in another, which formerly contained forty members, there remained but two, and these females.

"This is a gloomy picture; but there is one view in which it is still more gloomy. If the people of the United States are now in this condition, what is to become of their posterity? When we call to mind that seventy years ago, New England was supplied with one collegially educated minister for every 628 souls, and that now, in

the United States, there is not one such minister to 6000 souls; when we remember that this rapid degeneracy has been regular in its progress, that the great causes which produced it are every year, becoming more powerful and extensive in their operations; and when we add to all this, that the great mass of the community are not awake to the danger;—with what apprehensions must we look toward the generations that are to come.

"Statements, founded upon our College catalogues, prove, that in respect to the number of our educated ministers, we are far behind our fathers! But when we carry the result of these statements forward, and calculate the effect of continued degeneracy upon future times, an awful prospect opens before us. From these catalogues it appears, that for a hundred years after the settlement of this country, viz. from 1620 to 1720, more than half of all the graduates of our Colleges were ministers. During the next period of 50 years, that is from 1720 to 1770, only one out of three engaged in the ministry; and during the period of forty years next following, that is, from 1770 to 1810, only one out of five engaged in the ministry. From 1800 to 1810, only one out of six. Let it here be observed, that the number of graduates has not increased so fast in proportion as the population of the country, so that the decrease of collegially educated ministers, compared with the population of the United States, has been even greater than in the proportion of the numbers one-half, one-third, one-fifth."

"From these statements taken together, the following conclusions seem to be established:

"1. That to furnish an adequate supply for the United States, would require more than 11,000 well qualified ministers.

"2. That we actually have less than one-fourth part of this supply.

"3. That the ratio of supply has, for a long time, been regularly and rapidly on the decline.

"4. That the number of pious young men, who are able to defray the expense of their own education for the ministry, is not sufficient to provide a remedy for this alarming state of things. Whether this fact can be explained or not, it is in vain to doubt it."

A single word of comment, on such extracts as these, were not only superfluous, it were fitted to weaken the impression, the mournful impression, which they must make on every mind not seared in sectarian prejudice. If Dissenters can still plead the case of America as illustrative of the spontaneous demand and supply of Christianity, and think it a favourable illustration, they are beyond the reach of reasoning. According to every criterion by which one could estimate the progress of religion, the United States most miserably fail. There are neither Bibles, nor Ministers, nor Missionaries, nor Churches, nor Tracts, in any thing like adequate proportion to the people—and yet we are to believe that they are not only a very religious people, but that they greatly excel this country, in the amount and purity of their religion. It is no answer to tell me, that, according to my own show-

ing, there is a lamentable want of church accommodation in this country, in London for instance; and consequently great ignorance, and irreligion, and profligacy, among multitudes of its people. That is true. But it is because an Establishment has not been fully carried out, and the very fact shows the need of an Establishment. In this country, it is the larger towns chiefly which are deficient in the means of religious instruction, because these are the very spots which have swelled beyond the Establishment; whereas, in America, it is the country districts as well as the large towns. If the Voluntary Church Association system be the true one, and if Establishments be great hinderances to the progress of religion, then America should be fully supplied with Ministers, and Bibles, and Churches, both in town and country, and instead of being behind, should be far superior to Great Britain, both in morality and religion. Having nothing to fetter it, the triumph of the Voluntary Church principle should be, and is complete. Does Christianity prosper in the same degree?

Should all that has been urged fail to convince the members of the Voluntary Church Association, should they allege that 1815 is a very remote date, and that matters in America are now greatly altered for the better, I shall come still lower down in the history, only remarking, while I do so, that this is not, in the least degree, essential to the argument—that if America was in such a state of religious destitution so lately as 1815, it is vain to plead that the system of Voluntary Churches is, in itself, quite equal to supply the spiritual wants of man. If it be sufficient, why was America in so deplorable a religious condition in 1815? Where, then, would have been the argument for Voluntary Churches, as opposed to Established ones.

Now, then, we turn to the accounts which are given of the religious condition of America, so lately as 1827, that is, five years ago. Surely this is sufficiently recent. I take the facts from the Americans themselves. As to the want of Bibles, we have the following statements:

"The want of Bibles in various parts of the country," says the American Bible Society, "is very great, and generally in our country, where the Bible is not possessed, individuals do not prize it enough to take pains to procure it for themselves. If, then, this national Society is not so patronized as to be able very greatly to increase its gratuitous appropriations, a fearfully large portion of our fellow-countrymen will remain destitute of that Word of Truth which sanctifies the heart. In one county, in the State of New York, 1000 families are destitute of a copy of the Bible; in another county, 800 families; and in other counties, 400 or 500 remain unsupplied with this Sacred Volume. In one county in Delaware, 500 families have no Bible, and no county is better supplied. In North Carolina, 10,000 families are living and training up their households without the Bible. In four contiguous congregations, in South Carolina, not more than two-thirds of the families connected with the *visible Church* are furnished with the Bible. In one-fourth part of a county in Georgia, more than 200 families have no Bibles. Other portions of those States,

and, generally, much of the southern and western parts of our country are in the same unhappy state of destitution.

"In surveying the destitute settlements," says the Narrative, of the Presbyterian Church, "which are without the regular ministrations of the Gospel, the remote northern parts of the State of New York, the States of Ohio, Indiana, Alabama, Mississippi, Missouri, Georgia, and Kentucky, present themselves in mournful array before us. For although in all these there are some regular, faithful ministers of Christ, there is an immense territory lying waste, without labourers to cultivate it. Now and then a travelling Missionary scatters the seed of the Kingdom. But having none to succeed him, the fruit of his toil is blasted for want of efficient cultivation. Of this we have painful evidence in the fact that, within the limits of a single Presbytery in the Synod of Indiana, *five Churches* have become extinct during the last year from this cause. The present destitute condition of those extensive western regions, and the rapidly increasing population, which far surpasses the increase of ministers, furnish pressing motives to exertion on the part of the Churches."

"The following," says the American Home Missionary Society, "is an authentic statement of the vacancies in regular churches, and does not include that part of our population estimated to be nearly *one-half*, which is not collected into churches and congregations. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, numbers nearly 2000 regular churches and about 800 of these are destitute of settled pastors; the Reformed Dutch Synod embraces 181 churches, 53 of which are vacant; the Baptists have more than 1000 destitute churches; the Congregationalists, a great number, and the Episcopalians more than 100. But leaving out of the calculation these and all other destitute churches, which are hungering for the bread of life; besides these, not much less than *half* the population of these United States, is, at this day, to an alarming degree, destitute of the regular administration of Gospel ordinances; and this destitution is increasing with every wave of emigration that beats back the western wilderness. It endangers alike the political security and the spiritual salvation of millions that shall come after us. Our population, says a correspondent from Indiana, at present is rated at between 2 and 300,000, and we have only twelve resident Presbyterian ministers in the State. The Presbytery to which I belong, embraces a range of territory nearly 200 miles in length, and 80 in breadth; in which we have only four members with charges, though we number 19 congregations. I am stationed in the centre of a large body of population, yet my nearest clerical neighbour lives at the distance of 50 or 60 miles. I was this year obliged to travel 140 miles to attend a meeting of Presbytery.

"It is not often that in any part of the United States we can find Presbyterian churches gone into decay. But this peninsula, Lewes, Maryland, has the melancholy distinction of seeing whole congregations dispersed, so that not a remnant of them is now left. There

are edifices, once occupied by some of the most useful ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ, that have sunk into almost irrecoverable ruin. Let a few instances suffice. A church once stood in Drummond Town, on the eastern shore of Virginia, in which it is probable that no less a man than Francis M'Kamie used to officiate. But it has totally disappeared. In Vienna, on the banks of the Nanticoke, there was formerly a building for the use of Presbyterians, but not a single vestige of it can be found. Eight miles from the village of Snow Hill, within the last fifteen years, there was a church filled by a large and flourishing congregation. But the flock is entirely scattered. It is probable that in the town of Cambridge a church of the same order once stood, but Ichabod may be written amidst its ruins. Instances of other churches might be adduced; but as the writer is not personally acquainted with their location, he leaves you to infer the number from the extent of our peninsula. There are congregations, the protracted existence of which is exceedingly doubtful. They have been struggling for a series of years with innumerable difficulties. When a minister is to be supported, several of these congregations are formed into a circle for the purpose. Thus some part of a preacher's charge must always be exposed to the incursion of every dangerous delusion."

"In all the States west of the Alleghany mountains," says the American Tract Society, "together with Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana, occupying more than half the territory of all the States in the Union; embracing in 1810, more than 1,000,000 of inhabitants; in 1820, 2,200,000, and now not very far from 4,000,000—into all those States, Tracts only to the value of 7000 dollars have yet been sent, since the formation of the Society, which is but little more than one-half the amount circulated by the ladies of New York and Brooklyn, or by the Tract Society in the single village of Utica; yet a large portion of that population have not the Bible, nor any places of public worship, nor any stated preaching of the Gospel, and are in a great measure destitute of the other means of grace."—*Vide Missionary Herald of America*, 1827.

I may add one or two important facts. There can be no doubt that the Presbyterian Church is by far the purest, and largest, and most flourishing of the American Churches. 16 of the 52 religious newspapers represent its sentiments, while the Congregationalists have only 8, and the Baptists 11, and the Episcopalians 4; and yet, in 1829, the whole of its collections, for home and foreign objects, was only 73,068 dollars, or about L.18,000. In 1831, its whole contributions, to foreign missions was only 46,256, or about L.11,000, and the whole contributions, of all the Christians throughout the Union, for this object, including their own Indian Missions, amounted only to 150,000 dollars, or about L.37,500, not equal to the yearly income of the one Society in England, called the Church Missionary Society, maintained by but a part of the English Establishment; and yet, it is understood, that money is more easily made in America than in Britain.

Then it appears that the free population of the State of New York in 1830 was 1,913,462, or nearly 2 millions, yet, in 1831, the whole number of persons in communion with the Presbyterian Church of that State was 76,178. Double this for the number of the communicants in the other orthodox sects, and withdraw one of the millions on the score of youth and age, still after these ample allowances, we shall only have 152,000 communicants among a million of people, who wait upon ordinances, and that in one of the oldest and most Christianized districts of America. Does this speak much for the state of religion?—I might go over the other States, and test them in the same way, and the results would be still more appalling, but it is unnecessary to multiply proofs. I may just add on the testimony of the Rev. Dr. Cathcart of Philadelphia, that there were 109 atrocious murders throughout the United States in the single year of 1829. Is there any thing like this in Great Britain, though with a larger population? What will the Voluntary Church Association men say now? It is to be remembered that these are not loose general orations, such as one will find in religious publications on the other side—they are facts—they are matter of arithmetic, the safest and most precise of all arguments. No one has contradicted, and no one can contradict them. In a general statement, unauthenticated by numbers, a man may be right or he may be wrong. The impression which he conveys is always liable to be coloured by his fancy or feeling at the moment. It is only such statements regarding America that Dissenters seem to have read. Here, however, there is no room for error or dubiety. It would not be difficult to show, from the reports of Religious Societies in this country, that we are doing as much, and a great deal more, than similar societies in America, and yet the haze of distance so immensely magnifies American proceedings in the eyes of many, that nothing but arithmetic will convince them.

The argument, then, drawn from America against Church Establishments, I consider completely at an end. Nay, I hold that the facts disclosed in the religious history of that country, strongly prove the necessity of a Church Establishment. America started in the most favourable circumstances for supplying her people with the knowledge of Christianity, without any aid from the State. The foundations of her religion were laid by most excellent and devoted men—the Puritans of England. Ever since her separation from this country, she may be said to have enjoyed a very favourable opportunity for cherishing and enlarging her religion. She has been blessed with peace—there has been the most entire liberty, civil and religious—the cheapest diffusion of knowledge—none of the luxuries or temptations of a high state of civilization. A wilderness had, indeed, to be broken up, but there was an ample supply of the means of temporal subsistence. No man needed to be under any worldly fears for the success of his family after his death. Money was easily acquired, and might, one would have thought, have been liberally devoted to the cause of Christ. Part of the country was blessed with the advantages of a

religious Establishment in its purest form, and the whole country was free from the many evils and abuses which Dissenters charge against Established Churches. With all this, we have seen how dismal have been, and are, the religious aspects of America; and if the system fails here, and fails in such favourable circumstances, where can we expect it to succeed?

But then, it will be said, that, within these few years, an extraordinary revival of religion has sprung up in the United States, and that the country will soon be in a far different condition from what it has hitherto been. My answer to this is—Supposing the religious revival to be sound, and really the work of the Spirit of God, and to be fully, and, in all respects, what it has been represented, still that the very idea of revival implies great previous declension and deadness—that there have been occasionally such revivals in some parts of America for many years, from the days of Jonathan Edwards, and downwards, while still a colony of England, and yet that they have been contemporaneous with such a state of things, as I have brought evidence to describe—that the more extraordinary and wonderful the American revivals are, they are the less likely to endure—that there have been revivals of religion in the Established Churches of these kingdoms; and yet that Dissenters, while strangers to such revivals themselves, have not, on account of them, been the more disposed to regard these Churches as the Churches of Christ—that we set no limits to the outpouring of God's Spirit, and rejoice in the manifestation of its fruits wherever they appear; but that we are not entitled to reason from any peculiar and wonderful interpositions, to God's treatment of the Church generally, and at all seasons, and that supposing the present, like previous revivals to cease, the Dissenting arguments proceed upon the supposition, that the revivals which are spoken of are sound and scriptural. I hope and believe that, in many cases, they are really so; but it is well known, that there is much in them which is both artificial and suspicious—that statements are made, and proceedings entered upon, in connexion with them in America, which no sober-thinking Dissenter could approve—that some good men, both at home and abroad, question their orthodoxy, and that altogether they are not so worthy of unmingled boasting, nor so clear an indication of the progress of religion, as some Dissenters imagine. If American revivals are to be pointed to as a sufficient answer to all arguments, in behalf of Church Establishments, perhaps some will be disposed to inquire, whether there have ever been such revivals as these in the congregations of the Voluntary Church Association—whether Mr. Marshall, or his friends, have any thing of this kind to appeal to, and whether we should not account the point unproved, till symptoms of it appear among the Dissenters here, as well as in America.

The last speaker is a Mr. John McLeod, whose short speech abounds in many unsupported assertions, and takings-for-granted of points which should have been proved. Passing over the assertion,

that the primitive preachers of the Gospel went forth taking nothing of the Gentiles, but freely gave as they had freely received—with the simple question, whether this is what the Dissenters do now, and whether our circumstances are the same with theirs—and also the assertion, as to the unfaithfulness of the ministers of the Establishment, with the question whether all Dissenting Ministers have equally clear views of divine truth, and preach the same Gospel—whether the charge is not greatly exaggerated, and whether the removal of Patronage would not remove what of it is well founded? Overlooking these things as sufficiently answered already, I lay hold of the only important part of the speech, an argument which, for wise reasons, none of the clerical speakers were bold enough to moot. It is a reference to the 23d chapter of the Confession of Faith, on the power of the civil magistrate in church affairs. The following is the obnoxious paragraph:—"That he, viz., the civil magistrate, hath authority, and it is his duty, to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the Church—that the truth of God be kept pure and entire—that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed—all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed. For the better effecting thereof, he hath power to call Synods, and to be present at them, and to provide, that whatsoever is transacted in them, be according to the Word of God." Now, in answer to the objection to the Church of Scotland, which is attempted to be raised from this passage, I have to remind the Speaker, that it is not at all essential to the principle of an Established Church, and may be expunged by the Church, should she so judge proper to-morrow—that, in point of practical working, the Established Church is never troubled with any interference from the civil magistrate, and is as free from it as any dissenting chapel—that the interference of the magistrate is allowed only in extreme cases—is always guarded with the provisions of being for edification, and according to the rules of the Church—is not much greater in the passage objected to, than is his interference to protect the Sabbath from gross violations, of which orthodox Dissenters themselves fully approve. I have, moreover, to remind him, that the magisterial power complained of, is acknowledged not only by the ministers and members of the Established Church, but by those who secede from her communion—that the doctrine of the Confession, on the power of the civil magistrate, is received and subscribed by the various bodies of the Reformed Synod, and original Seceders, and original Burgher Synod—that it was held by the United Secession Church down to 1806, and so was subscribed by many of her living ministers, such as Dr. Peddie and Dr. Dick, and the older members of the Voluntary Church Association—that it used to be subscribed by the Relief body, and, for any thing that I know to the contrary, is subscribed by them still. It will not do, then, to bring forward this paragraph of the Confession, as bearing peculiarly against the Established Church of Scotland.

I might stop with this defence, but, believing as I do, that the passage is grossly misunderstood and misrepresented, I shall add one or two farther observations. While no one contends that every word which is used in the Confession, is the best which could have been chosen, and every expression equally well guarded, as it might have been, had the framers contemplated the objections of future opponents, we must grant to the Confession of Faith, the same privilege which we extend to other writings, and which is peculiarly necessary in a work drawn up so many years ago—the privilege of judging of its meaning, not by detached passages, or particular expressions, but by its general scope—explaining the less obvious passages by those which are more obvious. It is well known, that this is the only way in which the Bible itself can be explained, and that one of the grand sources of error and folly in its interpretation has originated in men confining their view to one or two passages, to the neglect of others, which limit and qualify their meaning.

It were a mere waste of words, to show that no Church from her earliest days, downwards, has ever contended more keenly and unweariedly for the supreme Headship of Christ in his Church, and the independency of the Ecclesiastical of the Civil power than the Church of Scotland. Her constitution—her confession—the sentiments of her leading men—her history—her sufferings unto blood—the Acts of her Assembly are full of proof, upon the point that Christ is her only Head, and that no civil magistrate is permitted to interfere with her doctrine, or discipline, or internal affairs. The passage then which is objected to, must be interpreted in accordance with her known and proclaimed sentiments in other passages. I might attempt to show the true meaning of the passage in question, and its consistency with others and with the general doctrine of the Confession. But to prevent the imputation of partiality which might be alleged against me as a Churchman, I prefer to adduce two passages from the works of Seceders from the Established Church. These passages show in what sense the paragraph in question is understood by the bodies to which they belong, as also in which it is understood by the members of the Established Church, and as they were written years ago, it cannot be imagined that they are got up to serve the present occasion.

“To teach that magistrates and ministers should both be qualified according to the word of God, professing the true religion, and using their best endeavours in their respective stations, to promote the declarative glory of God amongst men, is one thing; and to teach, that the one of these powers may warrantably interfere with the business of the other, is quite another thing. The former was done by our forefathers; but to the latter they would never subscribe, reckoning it rather their duty to resist unto blood, striving against sin.

“Nor is it inconsistent with this for them to say, ‘That the magistrate hath authority, and it is his duty, to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the Church—that the truth of God be kept pure and entire,’ and so on. And to grant, ‘That he hath power to call

Synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them, be according to the mind of God.* Let the whole paragraph be taken in connexion. It begins with positively refusing to the magistrate any right to ‘assume to himself administration of word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven,’ i. e., he must, by no means, interfere with either the doctrine and worship, or the discipline and government, of Christ’s house. Consequently, they never dreamed of allowing to sit as judge upon any of these.† No, he is only to take particular notice, that those things, which are already judged and determined by the law of the God of heaven, and, in conformity to that law, agreed upon by the Church’s representatives, be all faithfully observed in their proper place. Let the passages of Scripture, cited in proof, be carefully attended to; and they make the meaning clear as noonday. In those passages, those that were over the king’s matters, are expected to keep in their own sphere; while those Priests and Levites, who were over the matters of the Lord, are required to observe the province, which the God of the Church had appointed for them. Good Jehoshaphat, on this memorable occasion, assumes no judging, or legislative power, at least in Church matters; but merely prompts and excites the whole office-bearers, in both departments, conscientiously to discharge the important duties of their respective stations, according to the rules already prescribed by God himself. In this sense, surely, a Christian magistrate may safely ‘take order, that whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven.’—*Explanation and Defence of the Reformed Presbytery*, 1801, pp. 37—39.

“That the Church is a free and distinct religious society, independent of any civil magistrate on earth—receiving all her laws from Christ alone—required to convene, adjourn, and dissolve, all her assemblies, from the highest to the lowest, in no other name than his; and taught to transact all her affairs, in virtue of that authority, which is derived from him, as her alone Head and Lord, we firmly believe. It is also our fixed persuasion, that no magistrate upon earth hath any judging, prescribing, dispensing, or controlling, power; either in, or over, the Church of Christ, strictly considered in her ecclesiastical capacity. Nor have we yet seen any inconsistency between this, and, at the same time, teaching, as we ordinarily do, that, amongst a people favoured with the word of God, bearing the Christian name, and having reached high attainments in State reformation, it is requisite for the magistrate openly to profess and practise the true religion, exclusively; not, indeed, as a thing to be judged by him, according to his own fancy, but as already clearly judged and prescribed for him, and his subjects, by the unerring standard of that Lawgiver, who

* Westm. Conf. chap. xxiii. sect. 3.

† In the above-mentioned animadversions, our reformers say, “It is a great fault to a civil magistrate to judge upon doctrine, errors, and heresies, he not being placed in ecclesiastical function, to interpret the Scriptures.”—Cald. Hist. p. 188.

is the sovereign Lord of both his and their conscience. If the negligence of others, and concurring circumstances require, we reckon it also the part of the magistrate, possessing a holy zeal for the declarative glory of God, to excite the ministers of religion to do their duty, by meeting together in their assemblies, and diligently transacting the affairs of the Church, according to their Lord's prescription. But the magistrate must not, upon any consideration whatever, interfere with their work, when met, any other way than by protecting, defending, and encouraging them, in carrying it forward; and being himself present, if he please, to satisfy his own mind, that they are acting according to the law of God. But judicially to pronounce any sentence, or, authoritatively to call, adjourn, or dissolve them, in his own name, he hath no power, in any case whatsoever. We consider it also to be the magistrate's province, formally and openly to declare his approbation of the Church's righteous decisions, and his resolution to employ the authority and influence, attaching unto his exalted station, for carrying these into effect. We are likewise of opinion, that the magistrate may warrantably punish gross outward acts of vice and immorality in general, whether they be transgressions of the first, or of the second, table of the moral law. Still, however, we apprehend, that all this may be said, and done, without any improper blending of civil and religious things."—*Idem*, pp. 30, 31.

So much for the interpretation of one body of Presbyterians, we now turn to another.

"In the third section of the 23d chapter of the Confession of Faith, the compilers mention certain matters connected with the church, and of a religious nature, about which it is the duty of the magistrate (or government of a country) to employ his authority; but this part of the Confession must be understood in a consistency with other parts of it, where the freedom and independence of the church upon the powers of this world, are asserted and vindicated. The magistrate must not claim a lordly supremacy over the church: for 'there is no head of the church but the Lord Jesus Christ,' (chap. xxv. sect. 6.) He must not interfere with her internal government: for 'the Lord Jesus, as king and head of his church, hath therein appointed a government in the hand of church-officers, distinct from the civil magistrate;'—and 'to these officers the keys of the kingdom of heaven, are committed,' (chap. xxx. sect. 1, 2.) He must not, as a magistrate, sustain himself a public judge of true or false religion, so as to dictate to his subjects in matters of faith: for 'it belongs to synods and councils ministerially to determine controversies of faith and matters of conscience,' (chap. xxxi. sect. 3.) Moreover, in the section now under review, the compilers of the Confession set out with declaring, that the magistrate may not take upon himself the administration of the ordinances, or any part of the government, of the church; 'The civil magistrate may not assume to himself the administration of the word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven.' After these limitations and restrictions

of the magistrate's power with regard to religious matters by the compilers of the Confession themselves, the authority which they assign to him in this section cannot be fairly interpreted as implying a lordly supremacy over the church, an official power in the church, or a right by virtue of his office to dictate to his subjects in matters purely religious.

"To understand this section, it may be proper farther to observe that their object was to guard equally against Erastian and Sectarian principles. Accordingly they set out with condemning Erastian principles, according to which the government and discipline of the church are devolved upon the civil magistrates, by declaring, that the magistrate may not take upon him either the ministerial dispensation of word and sacraments, or the judicial management of religious matters. But although they deny him all ministerial or judicial power in the church, in opposition to Erastians, yet to guard against the other extreme, they assert, in opposition to the Sectarious of that age, that it is his duty to employ the influence of his high station and office for the good of the church, and the advancement of the interests of pure and undefiled religion, and, in doing so, he does not go beyond his proper sphere, as the advancement of religion in a country, is the most effectual means of promoting the public good of society, as has been fully stated in the former propositions. Hence it is added, 'yet it is his duty, and he hath authority, to take order, that unity and peace be preserved in the church,' &c. These things they consider as peculiarly obligatory upon those at the head of a *Christian* community; for it must always be kept in view, that they speak of the magistrate, not merely as a magistrate, but as a *Christian* magistrate, who is bound as by the moral law, so also by his Christian vocation, not only to regulate his private conduct, but to order the whole of his public administration, so as to prove subservient to the interests of evangelical truth and holiness, and the advancement of the kingdom of Christ; and it is by uniting the exertions of the pious Christian and the enlightened magistrate, that he is to endeavour to have the ends here specified accomplished.

"With regard to the *means* which he is to employ for this purpose, they set out, as we have already seen, with declaring *negatively* that he must not attempt to effect these things himself ministerially or judicially. 'He may not assume to himself the administration of the word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven;' yet they assert positively, 'that it is his duty, and he hath authority, to take order, that it may be done otherwise, and by persons to whom the cognizance of such business properly belongs,—not by subverting ecclesiastical authority, but by endeavouring to bring it into free and legitimate operation, after the exercise of it has been in a great measure suspended,—not by taking the doing of ecclesiastical business into his own hands, but by taking order that it be done by rightly constituted ecclesiastical courts. Hence it is added in

the end of the section, 'For the better effecting whereof, he hath power to call synods,' &c.

"This is the only means specified by the compilers, and considered by them as the most effectual; but the phrase, 'for the better effecting whereof,' obviously supposes that there are other means competent to him from which he is not precluded. To remove all difficulties as to the nature and extent of these, it may be necessary to remark, 1st, That they are to be limited by the negative assertion mentioned above, viz., That he is not to interfere, either ministerially or judicially, in the internal affairs of the church; 2dly. With this limitation, the Christian magistrate may, nevertheless, in a number of particulars, bring the influence and authority of his station to bear directly upon the objects specified. *First*, As a pious Christian, he may promote these ends more effectually than others by advice and example, as his advice and example are calculated to have more weight, owing to the high station which he fills in society; and, *secondly*, as an enlightened and patriotic magistrate, he may contribute to the same ends, in a variety of ways, as we have already seen (art. 3.) in the due exercise of his official authority, 'by recognising and giving public countenance to the profession of true religion,—by removing from the civil constitution of the country, whatever may be found to stand in the way of its progress,—by endeavouring in every way competent to him, and consistent with its peculiar nature and laws, that its salutary influence have free course, and be diffused through all orders and departments of society,' &c. All this may be done without encroaching upon the proper business of the church, or violating the rights of conscience. It is necessary, however, to remark, that, so far as any of the things mentioned in this section, may be justly viewed as civil crimes, or gross violations of the moral law, the magistrate cannot be viewed as precluded from exercising his coercive authority for their suppression, as stated in the preceding article.

"To return to the means specified in the section, and considered by the compilers as the most effectual, viz.: bringing the matters specified, under the cognisance of Church courts,—they allow him, for this purpose, 'power to call Synods,' &c. With regard to this power which has given rise to much discussion, we may observe, 1st, That they could not understand by it, a power lodged in him by virtue of any supposed supremacy over the Church, after the explicit manner in which they elsewhere assert the sole Headship of Christ over her, as his independent kingdom,—or by virtue of any official character in her, after declaring that the Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church, hath therein appointed a government in the hand of Church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate. His calling Synods must then be viewed by them, not as an Ecclesiastical ordinance in the Church, but merely as a moral means to excite and bring forward her office-bearers in the discharge of their duty; 2dly, That the doctrine of the Confession on this head, both here and in the 31st chapter, has always been

received by the Secession Church, and continues to be received by us, as explained by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, in their Act, 1647, approving of said Confession, in which they declare, that 'his calling Synods, without any other call, is to be understood of Kirks not settled or constituted in point of Government, and not to the prejudice of the intrinsic power of the Church received from Christ, to call her own Assemblies.'

"With respect to the last clause, where a right is conceded 'to provide that what is transacted in them be according to the mind of God;' it may be observed, that it cannot mean, consistently with the doctrine of the Confession itself, that the magistrate, acting as such, is directly to provide what the decisions of Synods shall be, for this would amount to sustaining himself an official judge in matters properly religious, would be inconsistent with his calling of them ministerially to judge and determine in these matters, and would amount to a very glaring assumption of the power of 'the keys.'—*Testimony of the Original Seceders*, pp. 66—69, 1827.

These extracts, I confess, carry conviction to my mind, as to the meaning of the 23d chapter of the Confession, and doubtless, they will satisfy many who may have been in doubt or in difficulty in the matter. Should they fail to produce conviction in Mr. McLeod's mind, I know not what advice I can give him, except to apply to Dr. Peddie and Dr. Dick, the respective chairmen of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Voluntary Church Associations, and beg to know what were the considerations which satisfied their minds on the point, when they signed this part of the Confession many years ago. Perhaps these may be somewhat better than the reasons which induced them to change, if indeed they have changed their sentiments on this article of faith. I may just add, by way of illustration, that supposing Parliament on its meeting were to appoint a deputation of their number to visit Scotland, and meet with the General Assembly, and other Church Courts, and aid and encourage them in getting quit of Patronage, and every remaining abuse, that, in that case, the doctrine of the Confession, in the passage referred to, would be substantially realized, and yet, in my humble estimation, he would be very unreasonable who could quarrel with such a degree of State interference, as inconsistent with Christ's Headship in the Church.

I now take leave of the Speakers of the Voluntary Church Association. I have dwelt upon their Speeches at far greater length than their merits demanded, but I feared lest the interests of truth should suffer by silence or brevity. I have taken up almost every thing that was said, wearing the semblance of a fact or an argument important or inconsiderable, and I have answered them all. I am not aware of having flinched on a single point. It would have been very easy to have turned the speeches into ridicule, and to have been very severe, upon the speakers. Indeed the 'Churchman' has been blamed because he is not more severe. But I have thought that serious things should

be treated in a serious way. I have remembered that it is easy to rail, and no proof of the goodness of a cause to do so—that reasoning will stand when severity or abuse is forgotten. I considered, too, that something was due to the speakers, however unworthily they have acted, and so I have endeavoured to treat them as becomes a gentleman and a Christian. For the same reason I have confined myself to the accredited speakers, and not descended to unauthorized publications against Establishments which might have afforded occasion for very tempting remarks. In short, I have given the speakers every advantage, and the public will now decide the question between us, on whose side lies the Truth. I again, with pleasure, subscribe myself

A CHURCHMAN.

GLASGOW, *January, 15th, 1838.*

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE the first sheets were printed off, I have observed in the London Patriot Newspaper, which is the organ of the English Dissenters, and which, therefore, will give the best representation of their cause, of which it admits, that the whole number of Chapels in England and Wales, belonging to the three denominations of Protestant Dissenters (and they are the most respectable in orthodoxy, and, with the exception of the Methodists, the largest in numbers), amounts only to 2,200, and that the aggregate hearers are supposed to approach nearly to a million, which is only 454 persons to each congregation. The statement adds, that the whole number of Protestant Dissenting Chapels in England and Wales, is computed at 7,500; and then we are told, that the Socinians muster about 230 congregations, and that on the highest calculation, their whole united number does not exceed 15,000 persons. It is easy to see that many of the 7,500 congregations must be little more than nominal if the Dissenters of the three great denominations, are so inconsiderable, and when it is remembered that the parochial cures in the Church of England amount to between 10 and 11,000, it will not be easy to concur in the credulity of the Voluntary Churchmen, who would persuade us that either in Scotland, or in England, the Dissenters are the great and undeniable majority of the nation.

The author is concerned to learn, that the Rev. Dr. Dick, whose name repeatedly occurs in these pages, has been very unexpectedly called hence by death. It is scarcely necessary to inform the public, that the pamphlet was almost all printed off before the event was known. The writer mentions this, not that he is sorry or ashamed of any thing which he has said in connexion with the name of Dr. Dick,

for he has endeavoured to treat all the speakers of the Voluntary Church Association with the respect which severally belongs to them, and he believes Dr. Dick to have been an excellent and esteemed Minister of Christ; but he alludes to the circumstance for the sake of Dr. Dick's friends, to assure them that he bore no grudge or ill will towards the Chairman of the Voluntary Church Association—that the prominence of the office naturally led him to choose its holder as a fitting illustration of some points in his argument, which would have been drawn out as well in other names—that he heartily sympathizes with them on the loss which they have sustained—and that he trusts the event will prove an admonition to Controversialists on both sides to speak and write on the subject, as dying men to dying men.